TWO PLAYS OF BHASA

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TO MY WIFE, VEDANAYAKI.

You grieve when I grieve, rejoice when I rejoice,
You are glad when I am praised, and sad when blamed;
When I have keen anguish of heart, though unvoiced,
Lo, I've found you grieving for the pang unnamed!
When I am angry, you speak sweet words soothing,
You know to do the things to the times suiting;
You are to me a wife, a friend, a servant,
And a minister great and all-observant.

A. S. P. AYYAR.

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INTRODUCTION.

THESE PLAYS.

These two plays practically form one play, 'The Vision of Vasavadatta' being only a continuation of 'Yaugandharayana's Vows'. They are certainly among the best plays written by Sanskrit dramatists, and have a right to claim to be among the best plays of the world. The tense dramatic situations; the plumbing of the human heart in its various moods; the wonderful depicting of emotions, like love, anger, pity, loyalty, surprise, sarcasm, heroism, terror and serenity; the very charming pen-portraits of natural phenomena, like flights of birds, sunset, nightfall and stars in the sky; the vignettes from life, like the scene at the hermitage, Padmavati's marriage preparations, and the meeting of the conspirators in the temple; the graphic narration of the activities of persons who never appear on the stage, but seem to the audience to be always there, like Vatsaraja in 'Yaugandharayana's Vows'; the exquisite delineation of characters in various degrees of social life, from kings to servants; the uncompromising stand made for human dignity, self-rule, freedom from foreign rule, and protection of animals and men; the kindly treatment of subordinates and servants; all proclaim these works to be those of a master not inferior to Shakespeare or Kalidasa or Goethe. That itself is sufficient reason for taking in hand the translation of these wonderful plays, and it may be, perhaps, unnecessary to consider whether Bhasa is their author, especially seeing the fierce controversy which has raged round the authorship of these two and the other eleven plays,[1] discovered by Mahamahopadhyaya Ganapathi Sastri in 1909-1910.

ARE BY BHASA, AND NOT BY CHAKKIYARS.

At the request of several friends, who liked my "Panchatantra and Hitopadesa Stories", I have undertaken the translation of these two great plays, pronounced by consummate scho-

[1] The 13 Plays are:—Pratijna Yaugandharayana; Svapnavasavadatta; Pancharatra; Charudatta; Avimaraka; Balacharita; Madhyamavyayoga; Karnabhara; Urubhanga; Dutavakya; Pratimanataka; Abhishekanataka; and Dutaghatotkacha.

lars, who have delved into the question deeply, like Mahamahopadhyaya Ganapathi Sastri and Dr. Sukthankar, to be genuine works of the great Bhasa. I myself agree with that view, and cannot for a moment see eye to eye with those who say that these are not the works of Bhasa, but creations or compilations of the *Chakkiyars,* the actors on the Kerala stage. I am satisfied that none of the thirteen Trivandrum Plays, rightly attributed to Bhasa, could have been creations or compilations of the *Chakkiyars,* much less these two. These plays deal with countries like Anga, Avanti, Uttarakuru, Kambhoja, Kasi, Kuntibhoja, Kuru, Kurujangala, Kosala, Gandhara, Magadha, Matsya, Madra, Mithila, Vanga, Vatsa and Videha, and cities like Kampilya, Kausambi, Rajagriha and Vairantya, and do not mention at all the Chola, Chera, Kerala, Pandya, Pallava, Ganga, Karnataka or other southern kingdoms, or Kànchi, Tanjai, Vanji or Madura or other famous southern towns, and, so, could not have been written by the *Chakkiyars,* who could not have also known about Darsaka or Pradyota. Only the rivers Ganges, Jumna and Narmada are mentioned in the plays, and not the Godavari, Krishna or Kaveri, another argument against the theory of the *Chakkiyar* origin. The plays too show the usual patriarchal society with women leaving their parents' homes on marriage, women wearing veils, etc., all alien to Kerala. Nor were the *Chakkiyars* men of such calibre as could have produced such great plays as these two, or, indeed, any of the thirteen plays. The claim that the *Chakkiyars* have written or compiled several such plays has not been substantiated by the production of any similar series, or, indeed, of a single play of merit comparable to any of these. All credit to the *Chakkiyars* who preserved these masterpieces of Bhasa in Malayalam alphabet so carefully and lovingly, and with so little omission or addition, and enabled the Mahamahopadhyaya to discover them and earn the eternal gratitude of all lovers of Sanskrit and good literature! Let it not be taken away by the contention of over-zealous critics that these care-takers constructed the temples!

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL THESE PLAYS.

All these thirteen plays have very many common characteristics which prove them to be the productions of Bhasa, as held by Mr. Pusalker, though there is reason to suppose that Bhasa himself wrote only these two plays *completely,* judging by the uniform excellence exhibited therein, and that his disciples and coadjutors wrote portions of the other plays, which show the

hand of the master only in parts, just as *Pericles, Timon of Athens, Titus Andronicus, Henry VI, Henry VIII* and other plays show Shakespeare's hand only in parts, the other portions being by inferior collaborators. Of course, in olden days, great masters, whether in drama or in painting, were not so very particular, as the moderns, in keeping their works distinct, and allowed coadjutors to join with them, just as they freely re-wrote or re-touched their disciples' works. Thus, Shakespeare allowed Kyd, Fletcher, Marlowe and Massinger to write portions of some of the plays attributed to him.

I shall briefly touch on the main common characteristics found in these thirteen plays, referring the readers who want detailed information to Pusalker's excellent book " Bhasa—A study ". All these plays except Charudatta begin after the *Nandi* (invocation), with a benedictory verse uttered by the Sutradhara or Stage-Director. The preludes and interludes are very brief, and are cleverly used to tell the audience what has occurred between the Acts. The *Bharatavakyam* (epilogue) in all the plays, where it exists, has the same common sentiments, namely, the desire that the king, usually styled Rajasimha, and said to be ruling from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas, and from sea to sea, should conquer the whole world (meaning India) and repel all foreign invasions, and that cows and good men should be rendered happy. The Rajasimha referred to is almost certainly Chandragupta Maurya, as will be shown later.

The rules laid down by Bharata regarding dramas are broken in several respects. Deaths, duels, and battles are shown on the stage; water is brought on the stage for ablutions, or worship, or making vows, or even to wash a tear-stained face, as in *Svapnavasavadatta.* Some words, like "Aryaputra", are given in many of the plays, meanings quite different from those given in Bharata's Natyasastra. Rapid progress in action is secured by making some characters 'go and return' without any intervening progress in the play. Frequent recourse is had to *akasabhashita,* that is, a kind of monologue in which a person on the stage speaks or replies to persons not on the stage. Clever use is made of narrations of captures, battles, duels, etc., so graphically indeed, that an illusion is created in the minds of the audience that characters who have never appeared on the stage, like Udayana and Vasavadatta in the *Pratijna,* have been there all the time. The idea that virtuous kings, though dead in body, live through their sacrifices and good works, is expressed in many of the plays.

A common but effective dramatic device in many of these plays is to give the reply to a moot question by an unintentional and unexpected answer supplied by a new arrival. Thus, when Mahasena and Angaravati wonder which of the kings who had applied for Vasavadatta's hand is to be chosen, the chamberlain comes and says "Vatsaraja", thereby unconsciously stating that Vatsaraja is the person to be chosen as bridegroom, though he has come to say "Vatsaraja has been captured". So too, in *Abhishekanataka,* when Rama and Lakshmana have been reported to Sita by Ravana as killed by Indrajit, and Ravana asks Sita in triumph "By whom will you be now set free ?" a Rakshasa, who enters just then, says "By Rama", though he has come to say "By Rama, Indrajit has been killed."

The names of the minor characters in some of the plays are the same. Thus, Badarayana is the name of the chamberlain of Mahasena in *Pratijna,* as well as of Duryodhana in *Dutavakya;* and Vijaya is the name of the female door-keeper in *Svapna, Pratijna, Abhisheka* and *Pratima.* Vrishabhadatta and Kumbhadatta are the names of herdsmen in *Pancharatra* and *Balacharita.*

There are some similar dramatic situations in these plays. In *Abhisheka* and *Pratima,* Sita rejects Ravana's overtures with a curse; so too, Vasantasena rejects Sakara's overtures with a curse, in *Charudatta.* When asked to salute their king, the heroes, in both *Balacharita* and *Pancharatra,* indignantly retort "*Whose* king is he?". In *Pratijna,* Mahasena refuses to believe the news of the capture of Vatsaraja till Badarayana asks him whether he has ever told him a lie before. So, too, in *Balacharita,* Kamsa refuses to believe in the birth of a daughter to Devaki till the chamberlain asks him a similar question. In *Avimaraka,* there is a discussion between the king and queen about a suitable bridegroom for their daughter, just as there is in *Pratijna.*

In many of the plays, cows are held in special veneration, and blessings are invoked on them. Favourite images are repeated, like the arrival of a distinguished personage being compared to the moon in the midst of the stars. Duryodhana, Valin and Dasaratha all see the sacred rivers and aerial chariot arrive for them at death. Several words are used with the same peculiar meaning, like *Nandi* and *Sthapana.* The same expressions "Make way, make way, sirs, make way" are used when exalted personages arrive. There are some lines of verse and prose found in identical form in two or three of the plays, the epilogue being a leading instance, another being about the uselessness of the

keenest eyesight on a dark night, in *Balacharita* and *Avimaraka*. Certain things are described vividly in several plays more or less in the same style, like sunset, nightfall, a city at night, battles, combats, and battle-fields. Battles are described by fairies, soldiers, Brahmans, etc. Though the metres are varied, the plays show similarity in their use. The opening stanzas in many of the plays indicate the leading characters by a clever use of paronomasia. Split-up verses, by the same speaker or by more than one, are found. In no play is the name of the author given. The name of the play is given only at the end. There are grammatical solecisms and prakrit archaisms in all the plays. The predominant sentiments, too, are the same in all the plays, namely, the desire for the independence of each country, the passion to keep foreign invaders out, the scoffing at begging for independence at others' hands, and the duty of kings to protect cows and to preserve the ancient *Varnasrama dharma* of the land, to honour hermits, to uphold justice, and to make good men happy.

WHO WAS BHASA?

Bhasa was an old and famous dramatist even by the days of Kalidasa who most probably lived in the 5th century A.D. In his *Malavikagnimitra,* which shows clear traces of copying of the plot of *Svapnavasavadatta,* Kalidasa refers to Bhasa, Saumila and Kaviputra (Ramila, the brother of Saumila) as glorious poets of old, and, in his Sakuntala, refers to his own work as new. This Saumila and his brother Ramila (or Kaviputra) are said to have lived in the first century A.D., and are reputed to have written "Sudrakakatha" and "Maniprabha", both not extant now. As Bhasa is put before Saumila, he must have been, of course, a dramatist who lived before the first century A.D. Of course, 'Bhasa' is only the name of a *gotra* (a branch of the *Agastya gotra*) like 'Patanjali', and 'Yaugandharayana'.

In a commentary on the *Prithvirajavijaya* of Jayanaka, Bhasa and the great sage Veda Vyasa, of Mahabharata fame, are said to have disputed as to who was the better writer. Each threw one chosen work into the fire, and Bhasa's "Vishnu Dharma" is said to have come out of it unscathed, while Vyasa's book was burnt. Unfortunately, men have not been able to preserve what the elements spared, and Bhasa's "Vishnu Dharma" is not discovered yet, though, I am sure, it will be one day, like the Arthasastra, and, indeed, these thirteen plays.

Foreign invasions and internal anarchy are responsible for their loss, as for that of invaluable works of architecture, sculpture, painting, etc. The very tradition of Bhasa's contest with Vyasa shows his hoary antiquity.

Asvaghosha has, in his *Buddha Charita,* clearly imitated verse 18 in Act I of "Yaugandharayana's Vows". So, Bhasa was earlier than Asvaghosha who almost certainly lived not later than the first century A.D.

Sudraka, who lived about the second century A.D., has based his famous play "Mrichchhakatika" on Bhasa's "Charudatta."

Kautalya, who almost certainly wrote his Arthasastra in the fourth century B.C., quotes in it verse 2 of Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows." So, Bhasa was evidently a senior contemporary of Kautalya, something like Tagore being a senior contemporary of Gandhi, and belonged to the fourth century B.C., and lived in the days of Chandragupta Maurya.

This is also clear from the frequent references to the Moon (Chandra) saved from Rahu (Rakshasa, Nanda's premier), to Rajasimha, or lion among Kings, a title suggested for Chandragupta in the Mudrarakshasa, and probably adopted by the Mauryas in general, as is likely from the spirited lions of Sanchi Tope. This is also probabilised from the description of Rajasimha as ruling all the country between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, and from sea to sea, an accurate account of Chandragupta's dominions in the early years of his rule. Yaugandharayana is evidently intended to represent, covertly, Bhasa's own contemporary, Chanakya, and his famous vow, his fighting the Nandas, being helped by a *sramanaka,* Jeevasiddhi, really his own man in disguise, making Chandragupta capture Pataliputra, filling that city with spies, and his making him marry Durdhara for political reasons, just as Padmavati is married for similar reasons. The description of Yaugandharayana as a cloud, with the moon showing through, applies aptly to Chanakya, the dark southerner, and to Chandragupta. Mahasena may covertly allude to Poros, and his Nalagiri, to Poros's famous elephant.[2] The constant prayers to keep the foreign invaders out obviously refer to the invasions of Alexander the Great and Seleukos. The prayer for the protection of the cows also shows the hold that the *Vrishala* civilisation of the Mauryas had on Bhasa. Ravana, in the *Pratima,* suggests the sacrifice of a cow or the golden deer at Dasaratha's *sraddha,* and Rama prefers the latter.

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[2] Please see my "Three Men of Destiny" for further parallels.

Bana refers to Bhasa in his *Harshacharita* as follows: "Bhasa gained as much fame, by his plays beginning with benedictory verses spoken by the stage-directors, and containing numerous and varying characters and stirring episodes, as he would have done by the erection of *temples*, like those constructed by famous architects, with several stories and banners." This shows that Bhasa wrote many plays with several acts (stories) and interludes and preludes (banners), that these plays began with verses spoken by stage-directors and were full of a holy and religious atmosphere (like the *Abhisheka, Pratima, Balacharita, Dutavakya*, etc., as the comparison is to *temples*, and not to *palaces* or *dance-halls*), that they were famous even in Bana's days, and that they had numerous characters. This will effectively dispose of the opinions of some critics that no Sanskrit dramatist was allowed to write more than three plays, a rule which evidently came into force only far later than Bhasa's days.

In *Avanti Sundari Katha*, of the 7th or 8th century A.D., there is the following passage:—"Bhasa is living through his dramas. They constitute, as it were, his body, which has assumed so many different forms in these plays." This clearly shows that Bhasa wrote a number of plays, and the reference will fit in with the present 13 plays. In fact, there may be an allusion in that passage to the fine scene in *Dutavakya*, where the body of Vasudeva assumed various forms, and Vasudeva lived in all those different forms, thereby showing that *Dutavakya* was known to be a play of Bhasa.

Rajasekhara says, in his *Sukthimuktavali*, "When critics subjected Bhasa's *cycle of plays* to the test of fire, the fire did not burn the *Svapna*." This also shows that Bhasa wrote a number of plays, and that *Svapnavasavadatta* was considered to be the best among them. *Svapnavasavadatta* is certainly the best among the Trivandrum plays ascribed to Bhasa.

Chronology of the Plays.

Mr. Pusalker has made an attempt to arrange the thirteen plays in the order in which Bhasa might have written them, namely, *Dutavakya, Karnabhara, Dutaghatotkacha, Urubhanga, Madhyamavyayoga, Pancharatra, Abhishekanataka, Balacharita, Avimaraka, Pratima, Pratijna, Svapnavasavadatta*, and *Charudatta*, which last, is, of course, incomplete and is supposed to have been left like that owing to Bhasa's death. The points taken into consideration by him in arranging the plays in this order are the

matter and manner of the plays, the extent of their maturity, and considerations of the dialogues, verses, poetic licences and weak endings. After a careful consideration of the subject, I am disposed to agree with him generally. The 13 plays undoubtedly show a progressive growth in dramatic technique and skill, and in originality. The earlier themes were all taken from the epics, and the latest themes are from folklore and popular legends, or are creations of the poet's own imagination. The progression is something like that of Shakespeare from plays like *Love's Labours Lost* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* to plays like *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*.

BHASA'S TOTAL OUTPUT.

One tradition has it that Bhasa wrote 23 plays, and another that he wrote 30 plays. There is nothing very surprising in this, seeing that Shakespeare wrote 37 plays. Of course, the large number was, as in the case of Shakespeare, due to some portions of the plays being written by others, either coadjutors or disciples.

MISSING STANZAS.

That some stanzas ascribed to Bhasa by the anthologists are not to be found in these thirteen plays will not show that these plays are not Bhasa's. As Mr. Pusalker has shown, after an exhaustive discussion, only ten of the verses found in the anthologies can be really Bhasa's. These anthologists have, in some cases, ascribed verses of one author to another, nothing to be wondered at when printing was not known, manuscripts were rare, and knowledge was largely transmitted by oral means, and retained by memory which plays so many tricks. There is also no doubt that copyists often omitted many verses and passages, just as even now copyists omit passages when preparing copies of records. Some of the copyists might have omitted, in addition, some of the stanzas which were objected to by critics, or passages not agreeing with their views, and also added or altered some verses, in a vain attempt to improve on them or to put the current niceties into them.

The thing is not peculiar to India. Even in England, a much smaller country, with only one main centre, London, Shakespeare's plays, written eighteen hundred years later, have suffered omissions and additions at the hands of scribes, pirates and others. We can imagine how much greater would have been the scope for all this in a country like India, 16 times the size of

England, and with at least 56 kings, who had their own courts and exclusive dramatic performances.

FIVE VERSES RESTORED.

After careful consideration, I have put in five of the genuine Bhasa verses, omitted from "The Vision of Vasavadatta", into their proper places. The first is verse 2-a in Act IV. This has been attributed to Bhasa by Ramachandra and Gunachandra, and is expressly said to be extracted from *Bhasa's Svapnavasavadatta.* I have also the high authority of Dr. Sukthankar for this insertion. Needless to say, I agree with his arguments. It is natural for the king to reinforce the Jester's conclusion by his own observation. The verse itself has been accepted by most critics as a genuine verse of Bhasa.

The next is verse 4-a in Act IV. This verse is very beautiful, and is a description of an ideal Hindu wife. This is ascribed to Bhasa by the *Subhashitavali.* Though Mr. Pusalker wants to put this verse in the Fifth Act, before the famous dream scene, or in the lamentations of the king in Act VI, after Vasavadatta's nurse comes to him with a message from Angaravati, I am satisfied that its proper place is where I have put it. The very next speech after where I have put it, that of Vasavadatta when she says, "Well, well, I am now amply rewarded for all my suffering. Even this disguise has many merits" probabilises it. Above all, Padmavati's speech in answer to the maid's remark "Princess, really, my lord lacks all courtesy", to the effect "Not at all, my dear. My lord has shown great courtesy in remembering, even now, all the merits of the noble Vasavadatta", shows that the king must have recounted a number of merits, as in verse 4-a, and not merely made the general remarks in verse 4.

The next is verse 7-a in Act V, which is attributed to *Svapnavasavadatta* by Abhinavagupta, who quotes it as an instance where the poet's love for figurative language prevails over his regard for the deep emotion which would make such language improbable. This remark applies, of course, to this context, as the king, while telling the Jester that his dead queen is alive, speaks not about his great surprise or joy at her resuscitation, as he should have in that great emotional storm, but of her storming his eye-lids with her beauty, and entering his heart, thus going back to the days when he fell in love with her at first sight, curiously enough a reason given by some scholars for rejecting this verse, forgetting Abhinavagupta's pertinent comments.

The next is verse 8-a in Act V. This verse occurs in Saradatanaya's '*Bhava Prakasa*' when discussing in detail the entire plot of a Svapnanataka. The other details given there agree with the details in our *Svapna,* and there is no doubt whatever that Dr. Ganapathi Sastri is right in putting this verse after verse 8 in Act V.

The last is verse 17-a in Act VI. This verse is quoted by Dandin in his *Kavyadarsa* (II. 280) without mentioning the work or the author. I agree with Mr. Pusalker that it is from this play, and ought to be put in here.

BHASA'S GREATNESS.

Bhasa was certainly one of the great immortals, like Shakespeare or Kalidasa. He plumbed the human heart in its depths as well as in its shallows, in its great virtues as well as in its gross depravities, in moments of supreme anger as well as of love and pity. There is no emotion which he has not depicted beautifully. I shall now briefly deal with his greatness as a dramatist and poet.

WIDE RANGE OF PLAYS.

The first thing which must strike anybody is the number and the wide range of his plays, especially when we consider that other Sanskrit dramatists, like Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, wrote only three plays each, in deference to an absurd and wooden-headed rule of the Sanskrit dramatic pandits. But, Bhasa wrote at least these 13 plays which belong to seven different types of drama. *Abhisheka, Balacharita, Avimaraka, Svapnavasavadatta,* and *Pratima,* are *Natakas* or full-fledged dramas, with five acts and over; *Charudatta* is a *Prakarana*; *Pancharatra* is a *Samavakara; Pratijna Yaugandharayana is* an *Ihamriga; Karnabhara, Dutaghatotkacha* and *Urubhanga* are *Utsrishtikangas; Dutavakya* is a *Vithi,* and *Madhyamavyayoga* is a *Vyayoga.* All these, of course, deal with different types of subjects and characters, and differ in the number of Acts, etc. But, as Bhasa lived before the dramatic rules were fixed, several of his dramas do not conform exactly to the later definition of the types under which they have been arranged by me. Thus, *Pratijna* has been classified as a *Prakarana* by some; and *Dutaghatotkacha, Urubhanga* and *Dutavakya* have been classified as *Vyayogas* by some.

Even English readers unfamiliar with Sanskrit classifications will see immense differences between these dramas in Acts, plots, types of characters, verses, sentiments, etc. For instance, *Avimaraka* is a pure comedy, and *Urubhanga* is a pure tragedy, the only tragedy in Sanskrit dramatic literature. *Pratima* is a serious comedy of morals, but Act II, depicting Dasaratha's agony and death at his separation from Rama, is a pure tragedy. *Abhisheka* is also a serious comedy, but in Act I, the shooting and killing of Valin is a little tragedy by itself. *Karnabhara* is a play with tragedy brooding over it, but never actually bursting; so is *Dutaghatotkacha*. *Charudatta* is an uncompleted play which might have ended as a comedy or tragedy, according as the dramatist chose. It ends now with Vasantasena starting in a storm, despite her maid's advice, to meet *Charudatta* for returning his wife's pearl necklace.

The subjects are, of course, very varied. These 13 plays can be classified into four groups, according to their subject-matter. *Pratima* and *Abhisheka* derive their main plot from the *Ramayana*, and *Dutavakya*, *Karnabhara* and *Urubhanga* from the *Mahabharata;* in *Madhyamavyayoga*, *Pancharatra*, and *Dutaghatotkacha*, the plots are inventions of the poet, though the characters who appear in them are found in the *Mahabharata; Balacharita* is based on the religious legends which were later on embodied in the *Bhagavata Purana; Pratijna, Svapnavasavadatta* and *Avimaraka* derive their plots from popular folklore; *Charudatta* is probably a creation of the dramatist himself. But, even when Bhasa takes over the plots, he makes vast changes in order to increase the dramatic effect, or to take out elements which might detract from such effect. We shall see, later on, what vast changes he has made in the folklore story forming the basis of the two plays dealt with in this book. Similar vast changes have been made in the other cases also. To quote an instance from the other plays: contrary to the Ramayana story, Bhasa has made Rama and Ravana meet, in *Pratima*. Again, he has made Rama pursue the golden deer not to please a whim of Sita, but to make a valued offering to the manes of his deceased father. So, too, he has ennobled the characters of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. Rama does not speak the extremely painful and harrowing words to Sita, asking her to go and live in the house of Lakshmana, Bharata, Sugriva, Vibhishana, or others, as he does not want her to live with him as wife any more, having lived in a stranger's house. Sita does not make the undignified,

though characteristically womanish, remarks to Lakshmana that he is not going to the succour of Rama, when he had gone after the golden deer, in order that he might wed her after his brother's death. Lakshmana does not, as in the Ramayana, make a suggestion to Rama, at Chitrakuta, that Bharata had better be killed at once, as he feared that he had come to kill his possible rival, Rama. Duryodhana is made a much better character than in the Mahabharata, where he is only one step from wickedness personified. In *Pancharatra,* he is shown as a generous donor; and in *Urubhanga,* he is depicted as a great and just warrior, affectionate towards his father, mother, wives and son. Indeed, he is shown as regretting the fracture of his thighs, not for his own sake, but because it prevented him from prostrating to his parents, and from taking his infant son on his lap. Karna in *Karnabhara,* is shown in a much better light than in the *Mahabharata,* all his carping jealousy of Arjuna and unscrupulous abetment of Duryodhana being dropped. In *Madhyamavyayoga* the story is like that of Sunahṣepa, but has been lifted to a higher plane by making all equally self-sacrificing.

WIDE RANGE OF CHARACTERS.

Another striking thing in Bhasa is the wide range of his characters, already remarked on by Bana. Among his characters figure gods like Rama, Krishna, Balarama, Indra and Agni; demi-gods like Vidyadharas; demons like Ravana, Kamsa, Ghatotkacha and Vibhishana; goddesses like Katyayani; demonesses, like Hidimba; angels and divine sages like Narada; kings like Dhritarashtra, Dasaratha, Duryodhana, Sakuni, Salya, Kuntibhoja, Ugrasena, Mahasena, Udayana, Virata and Yudhishtira; queens like Gandhari, Kausalya, Sumitra, Kaikeyi, Sita, Malavi, Pauravi, Angaravati, Vasavadatta, Padmavati, and Kunti; princes like Duhsasana and Durjaya; princesses like Duhsala, Kurangi and Devaki; ministers like Yaugandharayana, Rumanvan, Bharatarohaka, Kaunjayana, Sumantra, Bhutika, and Salankayana; heroes like Karna, Asvathama, Avimaraka, Charudatta, Bhishma, Drona, Bhima, Arjuna, Abhimanyu, Lakshmana, Bharata, Satrughna, and Uttara; jesters like Vasantaka and Santushta; monkey notabilities like Valin, Hanuman, Sugriva, Tara, Angada, Kakubha and Bilamukha; chamberlains like Badarayana; aide-de-camps like Hamsaka; majordomos like Nirmundaka; messengers like Salaka; nurses like Vasundhara; female-door-keepers like Vijaya; students like the student of theology appearing in the "*Svapna*"; sacrificial priests, as in *Pancharatra;*

a Brahmin family, as in *Madhyamavyayoga*; pugilists like Chanura and Mushtika; fussy petty officers; white-washers, shampooers, soldiers, and guards; burglars like Sajjalaka; villains like Sakara, the Indian Falstaff, and Vita; courtesans like Vasantasena; maids of honour, ordinary maids and attendants. Each one of them is given an individual character, however high or low the station. This will be clear from the analysis of the characters in these two plays given later on. No two can be more different than Yaugandharayana, quick in action, and direct and sparing in words, and Kaunjayana, dilatory in action, and irritatingly long-winded in speech, and flying off at a tangent most of the time.

Not content with having such a variety of characters from among human beings, and above or slightly below them, Bhasa has included, among his characters, a serpent, Kaliya; a bull, Arishtavrishabha; and an eagle, Garuda; and even Krishna's discus, conch, bow, club and sword, and the "Curse" and "Good Fortune" of Kamsa, and, what is more, has made these also acquire individuality and life by vivid descriptions of them and memorable words uttered by them. It will be obvious that Bhasa has dealt with men, women, gods and demons, from the highest to the lowest, taking up the vertical as well as the horizontal sections.

UNEXPECTED AND NOVEL SITUATIONS.

Another remarkable thing is that Bhasa can put people in unexpected and novel situations, and, by viewing familiar things in unfamiliar poses, give a lot of enjoyment and instruction. Thus, a king is shown in prison, like Udayana. While kings in exile have, of late, become numerous, kings in prison are still a rarity. The high-born princess, Kurangi, is shown as madly in love with an outcaste, Avimaraka. The courtesan, Vasantasena, is shown as preferring a poor lover, Charudatta, to a rich and princely lover, Sakara. Father and son are twice shown, as in Sohrab and Rustum, as having a fight, the son not knowing that he is fighting with his father. Abhimanyu fights Arjuna, in the *Pancharatra*, and Ghatotkacha fights Bhima, in the *Madhyamavyayoga*. Charudatta mistakes Vasantasena for his maid, and orders her to take his garment inside.

ALL EMOTIONS DEPICTED.

Bhasa is a past master at depicting the various emotions or *rasas*. Each play has, of course, one or more *rasas* in it.

Dutavakya, which deals about the embassy of Krishna to the Kauravas, to induce them to give up half the kingdom justly due to the Pandavas, has got the *Vira* (heroism) and *Adbhuta* (surprise) *rasas*. *Dutaghatotkacha,* which deals with the embassy of Ghatotkacha, the demon son of Bhima, to the Kauravas to convey to them Krishna's message regarding Arjuna's determination to kill the 100 kings who had surrounded and slaughtered Abhimanyu, before the next day was over, has got the *Karuna* (pathetic) and *Vira rasas*. *Karnabhara,* or Karna's Burden, derives its title from Karna's realising that his skill in war, got by a trick from Parasurama, was only a burden to him, owing to the sage's curse "Useless be thy weapons in thy time of need!" and the play itself relates to the gift of Karna's body-armour and ear-rings to Indra, who appears in the guise of a Brahman, and begs of him and takes them in order to ensure the victory of his son, Arjuna, over Karna. The main sentiments in this play are *Karuna* and *Vira*. *Urubhanga* relates to the death of Duryodhana by his thighs being broken, contrary to the laws of war, by Bhima's hurling the mace at them, at Krishna's secret sign, thus hitting the undaunted warrior below the belt. The main sentiments therein are *Karuna* and *Vira*. *Madhyamavyayoga* deals with the rescue by Bhima of a Brahmin youth, who was being carried away by Ghatotkacha to his mother, Hidimba, for the ostensible purpose of feeding on him, but really intended as a trick to get her husband, Bhima, to return to her. The rescue is effected after a fight by Bhima with his son, Ghatotkacha, and after substituting himself as a proxy. The *Vira, Karuna, Adbhuta, Bhayanaka* (terror), *Raudra* (anger) *Hasya* (sarcasm), *Sringara* (sexual love) and *Vatsala* (non-sexual love, as for son, father, mother, etc.) *rasas* are all found therein. *Balacharita* relates to the exploits of Krishna till the death of Kamsa. The main *rasas* therein are the *Vira, Adbhuta, Karuna, Raudra, Bhayanaka, Hasya, Santa* (serenity) and *Bhakti* (devotion). Indeed, all the *rasas* are there, except *Sringara;* this is absent because Krishna had not yet passed the stage of boyhood. *Avimaraka* is a story like that of Romeo and Juliet, and relates to the love of the Princess Kurangi for Prince Vishnusena or Avimaraka, living as an outcaste for a year owing to the curse of a sage called Chandabhargava who had been called a "dog-eating outcaste" by the king in anger. The principal *rasas* there are *Sringara, Hasya, Karuna, Adbhuta* and *Bhayanaka*. The *rasas* in *Pratima* are *Vira, Karuna* and

Hasya; those in *Abhisheka* are *Vira, Karuna, Adbhuta* and *Bhayanaka;* in *Pratijna Yaugandharayana,* they are *Vira, Adbhuta, Hasya and Sringara; in Svapnavasavadatta,* they are *Sringara* and *Karuna;* and in *Charudatta,* they are *Karuna, Hasya,* and *Sringara.*

Now, I shall deal with some of the striking examples of the above *rasas,* found in these plays.

1. Hasya (Humour and sarcasm).

Jayadeva wrote in his *Prasanna Raghava* "Bhasa is a Prince among humorists" (*Bhaso hasah kavikula guruh*). The examples of the various varieties of his humour in these plays are, indeed, innumerable. I shall quote a few instances.

PLAIN AND SIMPLE HUMOUR.

Plain and simple humour is seen in the following cases. When in Act III of "*Yaugandharayana's Vows*", Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan tell Vasantaka that they do not understand why he thought that their plan was bound to fail, he replies "Sirs, I understand my thoughts first, and you next."

When the stage-director's wife, in *Charudatta* tells her husband that she intends to prepare things with ghee, milk, sugar and fine rice, his mouth waters, and he asks her where these things are, and she replies "In the market, at present", and he exclaims that he is like a blade of grass taken high up in a storm and let down to its own proper level when the storm has subsided. Asked why she observes a fast, the wife replies "To get a handsome husband". The stage-director retorts wittily "Of course, in the next birth?" She rejoins "what doubt is there?" The jester says "One does not eat the stone of even the sweetest mango." Sakara tells the rake about Vasantasena, "She has stolen may heart *along with the pericardium.*" Maitreya, who is asked to watch Vasantasena's jewels for the night, remarks to himself that he cannot get sleep any more than a monk having an assignation with a servant girl. When asked by Charudatta why the lamp is dim, Maitreya says "There is no more oil in the lamp than there is love in a courtesan." When Charudatta learns that Vasantasena, the courtesan, is in love with him, he exclaims "Love has come to me when all my wealth is exhausted. So, it must be subsided in my own breast, like a coward's wrath."

In *Pratima,* when Bharata goes to Chitrakuta, and snatches the water pot from Lakshmana, stating that it is his turn to

serve Rama, and brings water, Rama says to Sita jokingly "Oh, Lady of Mithila, Lakshmana's occupation's gone;", and adds, later on, humorously, "Bharata shall serve me in Ayodhya, and Lakshmana in the forest."

In *Dutaghatotkacha*, when the old Brahman tells Ghatotkacha that he does not believe in cannibalism, and cannot hand over any one of his sons to be a victim of cannibalism, Ghatotkacha asks him how his principle is furthered by all of them, five, being finished off, instead of one alone.

In *Balacharita*, Narada exclaims "Heaven is too calm for real enjoyment. There is no strife here. I must go to the earth, and stir up strife, and make my existence interesting. From my study of the scriptures, I must strike the strings of my eternal lute, and stir up strife."

When Avimaraka is given the invisible ring by the Vidyadhara, and is told that, if he puts it on any finger in the right hand, it would make him invisible, and, that if he changes it to a finger of the left hand, he would become again visible, and the Vidyadhara demonstrates this, Avimaraka coolly tells him "Please excuse me. Let me see whether the trick will succeed when *I* put the ring on *my* fingers.", and tries it, with the same result. All people whom he touches also become invisible. His bosom friend, the jester Santhushta, becomes invisible on being touched by him, but becomes very anxious as to whether his body has disappeared. So, he spits on his right hand to see whether the hand is still there, and is relieved to find it there. When Avimaraka and the jester enter Kurangi's room as invisibles, Avimaraka puts the ring on to a finger of his left hand, and both become visible. Kurangi's maid enters the room, and sees both of them; out of deference for her mistress, she does not make any remark about Avimaraka, and simply asks about the jester "Who is this man?" The jester replies "How discerning! Nobody else knew I was a man but you. Everybody else mistook me for an old woman!", and she drags him away lovingly, and he exclaims "What an outrage!" Kurangi, thereupon remarks to Avimaraka what a ridiculous old Brahman the jester was, crying out when a fascinating young woman dragged him lovingly, and the jester replies that he is no more ridiculous than Kurangi who wanted to commit suicide but cried out for help on hearing a clap of thunder.

In *Charudatta*, Sajjalaka, a Brahman burglar, remarks about his sacred thread "This is a sacred thread by day, a

measuring line by night!", as he measures the burgling hole with it. His remarks as to what kind of burgling hole will be the most artistic, the lion's stride, or the half-moon crescent, or the full-orbed moon or the elephant's mouth, or the pike's jaws, are also humorous.

SARCASTIC HUMOUR.

In *Dutaghatotkacha*, when Ghatotkacha is told by Duhsasana " We too are like demons. So, don't hope for an easy victory ", he replies "You are much worse. Demons do not burn their brothers, who are asleep, in a house of lac; they do not outrage the modesty of their brothers' wives; they do not celebrate the death of their child nephews!" Dhritarashtra tells Duryodhana, and Duhsasana that they and their 98 other brothers had brought their only sister, Duhsala, the gift of widowhood, by killing Abhimanyu and bringing the wrath of Arjuna, and Krishna, on their heads. On hearing about the death of Abhimanyu, he exclaims " There will be peace now—when all the world is dead!" He asks his wife, Gandhari, to go with him to the Ganges. When she asks him whether it is to bathe in the sacred waters, he replies " No, to offer oblations to our sons who are as good as dead, by doing this act of unrighteousness in slaying the glorious Abhimanyu, the nephew of Vasudeva." When Ghatotkacha delivers Krishna's message intimating Arjuna's resolve to kill the hundred kings who took part in Abhimanyu's slaughter before the next day was out, Sakuni retorts " Could it be done by words alone, the world were won! Were it by words alone, and nothing but words, the killing of the warriors were done!"

In *Abhisheka,* Ravana asks Hanuman how a mere man, Rama, could fight him who had fought and defeated legions of gods, and Hanuman retorts by asking him why, if he was so confident of his strength, he did not fight Rama and take Sita, instead of stealing her, like a thief, after sending Rama away, by a trick, to hunt the golden deer.

In "*Yaugandharayana's Vows*" Yaugandharayana utters words of biting sarcasm at Udayana's love-making in prison, and at Bharatarohaka's careful vigil over the jewel case after the jewel is gone, and absurd reliance on the branches after the trunk is cut.

UNCONSCIOUS HUMOUR.

This kind of humour also is found in abundance. Thus, the jester, in narrating the story of King Brahmadatta of Kampilya

city, names the King as Kampilya, and the city as Brahmadatta, as many a story-teller will do, when drowsy or confused and, when corrected, repeats them over and over again, ludicrously, to memorise them. Sakara says that his body is scorched with love for Vasantasena like a piece of old leather fallen on a red-hot charcoal, an apt simile, though he is unconscious of the humour of it. So, too, his remark, "when a man is dead, he lives no more!", his threat to Vasantasena that he will first cut off her head and then kill her, and his delightful malapropisms are amusing. Thus, he tells Vasantasena "I am like Vasudeva, the Lord of the Corpse Bazaar,[3] or Janamejaya, Kunti's son.[4] I shall catch thy hair with my hand, and carry thee off as Duhsasana did Sita."[5]

A more serious type of this humour is found as dramatic irony in many places in the plays. Duhsala, in her indignation at the unjust killing of Abhimanyu, cries out "The man who made Uttara a widow has brought widowhood on his own wife!", though the man who slew Abhimanyu was her own husband, Jayadratha, and the widowhood would, therefore, descend on herself. Ravana, after showing Sita the false heads of Rama and Lakshmana, asks her gloatingly "Who will now set you free?", and a demon arrives and says 'Rama', he having intended to say "Rama has slain Indrajit." Mahasena asks Angaravati, who is, according to her, the worthiest person for the hand of Vasavadatta, and Badarayana comes and says "The King of Vatsa."

HUMOROUS SITUATIONS.

Humorous situations are found in innumerable places. Thus, in "The Vision of Vasavadatta", the jester, Udayana and Vasavadatta give Padmavati, within a period of five minutes, the silly excuse that the tears are caused by the pollen of *Kasa* flowers dropping into the eyes. In *Charudatta,* Sajjalaka wants to pay money to Vasantasena for buying the freedom of her maid, Madanika, and marrying her. But, by a combination of circumstances, he steals Vasantasena's jewels from Charudatta's house

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[3] The epithet applies to Yama, and the man has confused Vishnu, who is called Yama's Yama, for Yama.

[4] The correct word is Dhananjaya, or Arjuna, Janamejaya being the son of Parikshit, Arjuna's grandson and Kunti's great-grandson.

[5] Here, there is a double confusion. Either Duhsasana ought to be changed for Ravana, or Sita ought to be changed for Draupadi. Sakara has, like many mythologists dealing with foreign matter, jumbled things.

and takes them to the horrified Madanika. These jewels are given to him by the jester Maitreya in his semi-drowsiness, mistaking him for Charudatta to whom he had to give the jewels the next day. Maitreya is sent to Vasantasena with Charudatta's wife's pearl necklace, and a story that Charudatta had gambled away Vasantsena's jewels entrusted to him. Before he reaches her, Vasantasena has overheard Sajjalaka confessing to Madanika about his thieving of the jewels from Charudatta's house. After Maitreya tells Vasantasena his story, and gives the pearl necklace, Sajjalaka goes and tells the story invented by Madanika, that Charudatta has sent the jewels to be given back to Vasantasena, as his house was old and dilapidated, and unsafe to keep the jewels.

In *Avimaraka*, Kurangi, pining at the separation from her lover, Avimaraka, is about to hang herself by making a noose of her cloth round her neck, when she hears a clap of thunder, and cries out "Oh, save me, save me!" and falls down.

In *Madhyamavyayoga*, Bhima, after learning from Ghatotkacha that his father is Bhima, asks him whether Bhima is like Krishna or Siva or Indra or Yama, gets the reply that he is like all of them, only far greater, and says "That's a lie!", and, at once, Ghatotkacha uproots a huge tree, and hurls it at him, following it up with the hurling of a mountain top. Bhima tells Ghatotkacha that he may take him by violence, if he can or by non-violence, if he cannot, and Ghatotkacha tries violence first and fails, and coolly falls back on non-violence, and takes Bhima to Hidimba.

Enraged at Vasantasena's taking refuge in Charudatta's house, Sakara, the Indian Falstaff, sends a message to Charudatta, through Marisha, asking him to send Vasantasena back by the next morning, and adding "Otherwise, you son of a slave, I will crack your skull as the turtle-dove does the garlic root. I will chew your head to pulp, like a melon caught between two jamming doors." Just after he had delivered this ferocious message, the jester, Maitreya, flashes a lamp at him in the darkness, and he gets frightened and flees precipitately, seeing his rake friend gone.

In *Dutavakya*, when Drona, the preceptor, Bhishma, the grandsire, and Sakuni, the maternal uncle, arrive together, Duryodhana offers them a tortoise shell seat, a lion seat and a leather seat respectively, thus showing that Drona could draw in his senses like a tortoise, Bhishma assert his prowess like a lion, and

Sakuni do great mischief by inside intrigue, like the pinching of leather shoes. When Krishna is announced, Duryodhana calls him a "servant of Kamsa", and asks every one in the durbar not to stand up, and do him honour, when he arrives there, threatening to impose a fine of 12 gold coins on any one who stood up. But, after this threat, there is a delightful aside wherein he asks himself "But, how to avoid getting up myself?" To screw up his courage, he keeps on looking at a painting of Draupadi's dragging by the hair, but, when the whole assembly stands up on the arrival of Krishna, he falls down from his seat in confusion. When Krishna calls his discus, Sudarsana, and other divine weapons to his aid against Duryodhana's attempted outrage on him, Sudarsana asks Krishna "What does the Lord want of me? Shall I pull down the mountains, empty the oceans, hurl down the stars?" On being told that he should kill Duryodhana, he is very disappointed, at the smallness of the task entrusted to him, and exclaims "If this miserable man should fall like this, all your trouble in coming down to the earth below, to rid it of all the wicked men, will be in vain, as there will be no leader for those wicked fellows to follow, and they will be left undestroyed." Thereupon, Krishna asks Sudarsana and the divine weapons to go back, and they do accordingly.

In *Balacharita*, the bull, Arishtavrishabha, causing terror everywhere, found the boy, Krishna, unmoved, and, so, said to him "Have you no fear for me, boy?". Krishna replied "I have come to the world to rid the human mind of fear. What fear can possess me, oh silly beast?". "Then take up your arms and fight me", said the bull. "No arms are necessary. These arms will do. What is more, oh beast, I shall stand on one leg. Butt at me, and throw me down, if you can." The bull butted at him, but, its power was quite inadequate, and it received such a ricochetting shock that it fell down and expired.

When Krishna was told that Kamsa was a great king, and was asked to salute him, he replied "Great king of what? Of the nothingness which is destined for him."

We get one of the most delightful examples of humorous situations in *Karnabhara*. Indra, disguised as a Brahman, requests Karna for a mighty gift. Karna prostrates to him. Instead of giving the customary blessing "Long life to thee, my son!", as such a blessing from a god would come true, and frustrate the very object of the mission, Indra says, "Oh Karna, eternal as the sun, the moon, the Himalayas and the ocean will be your fame!".

Then, Karna offers him a thousand cows. The Brahman replies "I drink but little milk. So I don't want the cows." Karna offers several thousands of the finest chargers. The Brahman replies "I ride but little. Why do I want the chargers?" Karna then offers a herd of the best elephants. The Brahman says "I never go on elephants. What use are they to me?" Karna offers as much gold as he wants. The Brahman pretends to agree, but says, later on, "No. I don't want the gold". Karna then offers to conquer the whole world for him and give it to him. The Brahman replies "What use is the rulership of the earth to a Brahman who cannot rule?" Karna offers him the fruits of his burnt-offerings and sacrifices. The Brahman replies "I don't want them, as I have enough of my own." The puzzled Karna finally says "I offer you my head; take it." The Brahman replies by a shriek of horror "Ugh!" Then, Karna begs his pardon, and offers him the most precious thing he has, his body—armour and the ear-rings, to which offer the Brahman replies "Give them."

Another instance is the gift of a spear to Karna guaranteed to kill one of the Pandavas. Finally, this spear kills not one of the Pandavas, as Karna and the world must have understood by the term, but Ghatotkacha, the demon son of Bhima, and technically a Pandava.

In *Pratima*, Bharata asks the charioteer "What disease is my father suffering from? The charioteer, who is unwilling to reveal the truth, says "A great disease of the heart." What do the physicians say?" asks the prince. "They are helpless in this case" is the reply.

In the same play, a professional painter and decorator, who has gone early at dawn and finished his work at the Statue House, and is having a nap, is given a shower of blows by the petty corporal who offers an empty apology for the assault on learning that the whole work has been finished. This is typical of India where a King beat to death a general who lost a battle.

In *Avimaraka*, when the Sauvira prince is concealed in Kurangi's rooms, Kuntibhoja, father of Kurangi, the King of Sauvira, Avimaraka's father, and the sage Narada, have the following conversation.

Kuntibhoja: Sir, is the Sauvira prince alive?

Narada: Yes.

Sauvira: Why is he not to be seen?

Narada: Because of his preoccupation with his honeymoon.

Sauvira: What, is the prince married?
Kuntibhoja: In what place?
Narada: In the city of Vairantya.
Kuntibhoja: Is there another town called Vairantya? Well, whose son-in-law is he?
Narada: Kuntibhoja's.
Kuntibhoja: Who is he?
Narada: Kurangi's father.

Again, in *Avimaraka*, we get this delightful scene:—

Maid (Chandrika): Oh Kaumudika, have you found a Brahman? What do you say? 'Not yet'?
Jester: What is it, Chandrika?
Maid: Sir, I am looking for a Brahman.
Jester: What do you want a Brahman for?
Maid: What do you think? why, of course, to invite him to dinner.
Jester: But, what am I, lady, a Buddhist monk?
Maid: Oh, but you don't know the scriptures.
Jester: How dare you say that I don't know the scriptures? Listen. There's a treatise on drama called the Ramayana. I mastered five verses of that in less than a year.
Maid: You must be hereditarily very learned.
Jester: I not only learnt the verses, I know the meaning too. Besides, I can read as well as understand, and Brahmins who can do both are rare, you know.
Maid: Well, then, read this word for me (shows him a signet ring).
Jester: (to himself) I have no earthly idea of what it is. What am I to say? (Pondering) Yes, I have it. (aloud) This word is not in my book, lady.
Maid: If you can't read it, you must dine without the gift of gold coins.
Jester: Very well.
Maid: May I have a look at your ring?
Jester: Yes, look at it. It's a beauty.
Maid: (Takes it) Oh, there's the prince coming this way.
Jester: (turning round and looking) Where's his highness? Where?
Maid: (To herself) I have hoodwinked the silly Brahman. ..Now, I'll mix with the crowd, give him the slip in the square, and get away. (*exit*)

Jester: (looking all round) Chandrika, Chandrika! Where has she gone? Oh, I have been robbed. I know what she was, the pick-pocket's slut, and let myself be duped by relying on that dinner. (walking round) Now that I think of it, I believe that dinner was a fake. (looking in front) Oh, there she is running away. Stop, stop, you wicked hussy, stop. Stop, I say! Run, will she? Well, I will run too. (runs) My feet stick to the same spot like those of a man pursued by an elephant in a dream. Curse it, I'll report this hussy's conduct to the prince. (*exit*)

In *Pancharatra*, Sakuni is sceptical of the finding of the Pandavas in five days. When Arjuna's arrow, with his name inscribed on it, is given to Bhishma, to discover the identity of the foe, he hands it over, with a delicate sense of humour, to Sakuni, stating "My eyes are dim with age. You read it", and the astonished Sakuni reads "Arjuna", and gets a shock!

2. Vira (Heroism).

This *rasa* is divided into three sub-clauses, namely, *Yuddha-Vira* (Heroism in battle), *Dharma Vira* (Heroism in virtue) and *Daya Vira* (Heroism in pity). The *Yuddha Vira rasa* is found abundantly in many of the plays, as in the battle between Rama and Ravana, Duryodhana and Bhima, Abhimanyu and Viratas, and Udayana and Mahasena's soldiers in the Elephant Forest. Two other conspicuous instances of *Yuddha Vira* are these. Jatayu, the bird, saw Ravana carry off Sita and fell on him despite his immense superiority in strength and the absolute certainty that it would be killed by him, crying out "I cannot see this atrocious act done so long as I am alive!", and Ravana cut off the two wings of that mighty bird which fell down wounded. Another instance is Ghatotkacha who, when told by the Kauravas that he was not killed because he was a messenger, and no messenger should be killed under the Aryan international law, replied "In that case, I divest myself of my character as a messenger. Fight me and see."

The *Dharma Vira Rasa* is found prominently in Rama's unhesitatingly abandoning his kingdom, and taking to the forest, for the sake of fulfilling his Dharma to his father to enable him to keep his word to Kaikeyi. In fact, Bhasa was a devout Hindu and wrote four plays on the four injunctions in the Vedas, namely, "Treat thy mother as a god; treat thy father as a god; treat

thy teacher as a god; treat thy guest as a god." The *Pratima* is a play showing a *Dharma Vira,* Rama, treating his father as a god; *Madhyamavyayoga* is a play, showing a *Dharma Vira*, Ghatotkacha, treating his mother as a god, and obeying her command to fetch a human being for eating, despite his own disapproval. The *Pancharatra* is a play showing a *Dharma Vira,* Duryodhana, treating his teacher, Drona, as a god, promising him half the kingdom if he found out the Pandavas in five days, and keeping that promise. *Charudatta* is a play where a *Dharma Vira,* Charudatta, protects a *guest,* Vasantasena, who seeks his shelter, despite the certain wrath of Sakara, and possible ruin.

Daya Vira is exemplified, in the *Pancharatra,* by Drona, who, out of pity for the Kauravas, and from a desire to save them from destruction, asks, as his gift at Duryodhana's sacrifice, half the kingdom for the Pandavas, just to avoid the Mahabharata war which eventually destroyed the Kaurava race. It is also exemplified by Karna in the *Karnabhara.*

3. Adbhuta (Wonder or Surprise).

The *Adbhuta rasa* is found in numerous places in the plays. Examples of it are the invisible ring given to Avimaraka by the Vidyadhara; the astonishment caused to Duryodhana in the *Dutavakya* when he tries to bind Krishna by a noose, and Krishna enlarges his body and makes it too big for the noose, and when it is made bigger, reduces his body to mustard size, and the noose ridiculously falls wide of the mark; and the appearance of the divine weapons; the appearance of "Curse" and "Good Fortune" in human form in Kamsa's chamber, in *Balacharita;* and in Kamsa's Lust personified by low class maidens soliciting him for marriage, and his exclaiming in surprise, "I am Death to the Lord of Death. I strike fear into the heart of Fear. But, oh, this Lust of these maidens, it pursues and harasses me!"; the body of Krishna breaking into light and showing the way to Vasudeva; the river Yamuna giving a passage to Vasudeva by divided waters; the purifying spout of water which falls on Nanda when rubbing himself with earth before receiving the baby Krishna; the coming to life of the dead girl of Nanda and its climbing into the sky, as the Goddess Katyayani, with her attendants, on being dashed on the Kamsa rock; the increasing weight of the baby Krishna, proving too heavy for Nanda and Vasudeva; the killing of Pootana, Sakatasura, Arishtavrishabha and Kaliya, and the uprooting of the two trees.

by Krishna; the slipping of the murderous soldier in the Elephant Forest; and the granting of a passage to Rama by the Ocean, by the familiar device of divided waters.

It will be noticed that Bhasa has effectively used magic in all its three well-known forms. Magic in "things" is illustrated by the ring conferring invisibility, in *Avimaraka,* and by the clothes transforming the appearance in "Yaugandharayana's Vows". The 'curses' in *Balacharita* and *Avimaraka* illustrate the second type. The noose incident in *Dutavakya,* and the thunder and golden deer in "*Pratima*" illustrate the third type.

4. Raudra Rasa (Anger).

Raudra is illustrated by Bharata's telling his mother, Kaikeyi, that she does not shine among his mothers, and that she is like a foul stream which has got in between the holy Ganges and the Yamuna; by his asking Vasishta, Vamadeva and others, who requested him to receive the consecrated waters, to consecrate Kaikeyi; by his telling Kaikeyi that, by acquiring her as a daughter-in-law, the proud house of Ikshwaku had got the further privilege of having another daughter-in-law, Sita, abducted by a demon; by Aswathama's terrible anger at Bhima's unfair blow at Duryodhana, and his oath to kill the Pandavas and crown Durjaya king; and by Sakuni's calling Drona a religious fraud when he demanded half the kingdom for the Pandavas as his sacrificial gift.

5. Karuna Rasa (Pity).

Karuna Rasa is shown in the sorrow exhibited by Vasavadatta and Kurangi at the separation from their husbands; the sorrow of Udayana at separation from Vasavadatta; the sorrow of Duryodhana on being unable to prostrate to his parents or to take Durjaya on his lap; the exclamation of Karna "In this supreme hour of battle, I find in my heart only black misery. Good luck to him whose time has come!"; the sorrow exhibited by Dasaratha on separation from Rama; Sita's asking Hanuman to describe to Rama her state in such a way that he might not break down on hearing about it; Sita's requesting Ravana, when he showed her the false heads of Rama and Lakshmana, to kill her with the very same sword with which they had been killed; Rama's telling Lakshmana and, later on, Vibhishana, when they told him that Sita was anxious to see him, that he would not see Sita who was sullied by stay in a stranger's house, and Sita's

asking for permission to enter the funeral pyre, and Rama's giving her such permission, and Sita's entering the fire in consequence.

6. Bhayanaka (Terror).

I shall now give some examples of *Bhayanaka Rasa.* Ravana's suddenly disclosing his demoniacal form to Sita after Rama had left for the golden deer; Ravana's exclaiming, after he had learnt about Indrajit's death, "What good to me is Sita, the cause of all this misfortune! On account of her, so many of my brothers, sons and friends have been killed. So, I shall cut out her heart, the home of enmity, and pull out her entrails, and put them round my neck"; the 'Curse' of Kamsa enters his sleeping room, black as collyrium, fire-brand in hand, with projecting teeth, eyes yellow like a snake's, and looking like Wrath incarnate, and bundles out 'Good Fortune' unceremoniously, telling her that her time is out, and there is no use her outstaying her welcome. So, too, Krishna, at the end of the *Balacharita,* gets up the balcony, and hurls Kamsa down by the head. Kamsa is then seen lying there with his visage thick with gore, goggling eyes, broken neck and thighs, shattered shoulders, loins and legs, fractured knees, snapped necklace, fallen bracelets and dangling sacred thread. In *Urubhanga,* the battle-field of Kurukshetra is described as a field of corpses of men and carcasses of elephants and horses, and vultures are said to have built permanent nests there, evidently as there was food for months on end. Sakara's threats to Charudatta and Vasantasena also fall under this head. The rake asks Vasantasena to go and verify from the policemen of the city how many of them had narrowly escaped murder at his hands, when they crossed his path, and asks her not to add to his murders a horrible one of a young and beautiful woman.

7. Santa Rasa (Serenity).

Santa Rasa also is found in several places. Thus, in *Dutavakya,* when Duryodhana twits Krishna with cowardice for having run away from Mathura to Dwaraka, fearing the vengeance of Jarasandha, the father-in-law of Kamsa, Krishna replies "Fools do not understand politics, or what befits the time, place and circumstance." In "Yaugandharayana's Vows", the chamberlain tells Yaugandharayana that Mahasena bears him no malice, and asks him to accept the chalice, despite his setting fire

to many houses which were still smouldering. In *Karnabhara,* when Salya asks Karna not to give the body-armour and the ear-rings, Karna replies, with perfect serenity, "Learning goes to nought with the lapse of time; trees firmly rooted are torn down by a storm, some day or other; the water of the deepest lakes will dry up one day; only gifts and oblations last for ever!" and gives them to Indra. After Indra has got them and gone away, Salya tells Karna that Indra has cheated him. Karna replies, with absolute calm, "You are mistaken, oh Salya. It is I who have cheated him. Millions beg of Indra for gifts. Indra has begged of me for a gift." In *Urubhanga,* Duryodhana becomes perfectly serene when death is near, and tells his son, Durjaya, in answer to his question, "Where are you going, daddy?", "I am going to meet my brothers!", and asks Aswathama to unstring his bow, so that the Pandavas at least might remain to perform the annual ceremonies to the manes of the ancestors. Finally, he dies in serenity, consoled by the loyalty of Aswathama, and his promise to make Durjaya king, and after seeing his ancestors and the Ganges and the aerial car driven by one thousand swans.

In *Pratima Nataka,* when Rama is agonised at the thought that he could not offer his departed father the dainties of the palace, to which he is accustomed, Sita remarks, with serenity, "Gods and good men are satisfied with what is offered according to the ability of the offerers. So, Bharata, my lord, will make royal offerings in the palace, and we shall offer fruits and water in the forest. Both will be equally acceptable to Dasaratha." Again, Kaikeyi, after having been constantly rebuked and insulted by Bharata, finally tells him that she had to ask Dasaratha for the boons, so that Destiny might fulfil itself on Dasaratha, and, incidentally, make good the curse of the Sage, whose only son he had killed mistaking him for a wild elephant, "Like me shall Dasaratha grieve for his son!" Bharata, after ascertaining from Vasishta, Vamadeva and others the truth of her story, begs her forgiveness. She readily forgives him, with the serene remark "Child, which mother will not forgive her son's faults?"

So, too, Yaugandharayana, when asked by Bharatarohaka what punishment is prescribed in politics for enemies captured in war, replies serenely, without caring in the least about its possible application to his own case, "Death!"

In *Abhisheka Nataka,* when the whole audience is wonder-struck at Sita's emerging out of the fire unscathed, and proclaims joyously to Rama that she is proved to be pure and unscathed, Rama replies, in serenity, "I knew Vaidehi's purity. I acted

thus only to bring conviction to the thousand-tongued world." After questioning Rama as to why he killed him from a place of hiding, contrary to the rules of war, and on learning from him that the rules of war did not prohibit the killing of animals by snares and guiles, and that he had been killed as a punishment for his adultery with his brother's wife, Valin becomes serene, begs of the Lord to free him from sin, and dies after entrusting the family heirloom, a golden necklace, to Sugriva, along with Angada, and after taking water from Hanuman, the lieutenant of Sugriva. He also sees the Ganges and other sacred rivers, and nymphs arrive for him with the aerial car sent by Death.

8. Bhakti Rasa (Devotion).

Allied to the *Santa Rasa,* but quite different from it, and altogether on a higher plane, is *Bhakti Rasa.* This has been divided into four sub-*rasas* in the ascending order of merit. The first is "Bhakti of one in distress", to get rid of his troubles. This is finely illustrated by the invocatory verse in *Urubhanga* which runs:—"May Kesava ferry us over a flood of enemies as he ferried Arjuna over the torrent of his foes, of which Bhishma and Drona formed the banks, Jayadratha the surging waters, the King of Gandhara the sucking whirlpool, Karna the waves, Aswathama the alligator, Kripa the crocodile, and Duryodhana the fierce current!" This type is also illustrated by Draupadi's frantic call to Krishna, when she was being stripped naked by the Kauravas, and the Lord rushed to her help by giving her an unending supply of cloth.

The next is 'Bhakti of the seeker for wealth or power'. This is illustrated by Ravana's penance to Siva and Brahma, and getting from them boons for phenomenally long life, unrivalled prosperity and power, and invincibility against gods and demons, he, having, in his arrogance, omitted mere men, and thus enabled God to come as man, in the shape of Rama, and finish him off from the world which he had pestered so long.

The third type of Bhakti is 'that of the seeker after knowledge', and is illustrated by the invocatory verse in *Dutaghatotkacha,* which runs as follows: "May Narayana, the sole refuge of all the three worlds, the stage-director of the main plot, preludes and interludes of the ceaseless drama of the triple universe protect you!" This is an attempt, by a seeker after knowledge, to describe God as Regulator of the universe, and to show his devotion to Him, with only a general prayer for protection, at a time when he is not beset with any trouble.

The last type of Bhakti is 'that of the wise', that is, of those who have attained perfect knowledge. This is seen in *Abhisheka Nataka,* where celestial musicians, who are, of course, endowed with perfect knowledge, come, and say to Rama, after Sita's ordeal by fire is over, "Salutations to Narayana, the cause of all the three worlds! Brahma is Thy heart; Rudra Thy wrath; the Sun and Moon Thy eyes; Bharati, the Goddess of Learning, Thy tongue! Oh, Lord of the three worlds, all the worlds, with Brahma, Indra and the Maruts, were verily created by Thee. Oh, Lord Supreme, Sita is Lakshmi, and Thou Vishnu. Do Thou receive her! When this earth had sunk into the briny deep, beyond all retrieve, then, oh Lord, you came in the form of the Boar, and raised her up once more! With three steps, you compassed the three worlds. Of your own accord, you and your queen have assumed these forms. By slaying the demon king, Ravana, you have made the gods more firmly established in men's hearts than ever before!"

9. Sringara Rasa (Love).

Sringara Rasa has got two main branches, *Sringara proper,* and *Vatsala. Sringara proper* deals with love involving the sexual element, and *Vatsala* with love devoid of it, like parental love, fraternal love, and the love of friend for friend, teacher for pupil, etc.

9-A. Sringara Proper.

The *Sringara proper* has got five sub-*rasas* illustrating the union of souls, of minds, of things, of bodies, and of lusts, respectively. First is *Dharma Sringara,* which is pure love, free from lust of all kind, a union between man and woman simply for the sake of discharging the duties of life including the handing down of the torch of life. There is no room in this for excessive conjugal relations or highly erotic sentiments, though one partner cannot live apart from the other without agony, and is willing to die for the other without a second thought. Such is the love of Sri Rama and Sita, in *Pratima* and *Abhisheka,* and it is aptly compared to the love of Satyavan and Savitri. Be it remembered that Savitri could leap across death, because her love for Satyavan belonged to this type.

The second type is *Kama Sringara* or married love, as it is understood generally. This is illustrated by the love of Vasavadatta and Udayana, Avimaraka and Kurangi. Here, there is a

very strong erotic element entering into the emotion, and the grief at the separation is largely caused by the physical separation, the spiritual element being not so very predominant, though, of course, always there in an appreciable quantity.

The third type is *Artha Sringara,* or marriage for political, economic or other worldly reasons. Here, materialism predominates. A leading illustration of this is the marriage of Udayana with Padmavati, the chief motive being the expected help of Padmavati's brother, the King of Magadha, for recovering the lost kingdom of Vatsa from the usurper, Aruni.

The fourth type is *Mugdha Sringara,* wherein emphasis is on *consortium,* pure and simple, the body counting first and last, and the mind and soul not coming into the picture appreciably, though they are present in the background. In this case also, the two partners can be quite faithful to each other, and can even pine for each other. A typical illustration is the union of Bhima and Hidimbi.

The last is *Moodha Sringara,* or idiotic love. Here, lust alone counts. It is pure lust of flesh, both partners not being even equally agreed, as in *Mugdha* Sringara, and not being even faithful to one another. A leading illustration is the love of a rake for the courtesan or prostitute, and *vice versa.* Bhasa has shown this kind of love by the sentiments of his characters, Sakara and the rake, who shout out to Vasantasena that she is a flower by the roadside for anybody to pick, that she is a chattel, to be bought for money, that she could not choose between friend and foe, handsome and ugly, good and wicked, and should yield herself to any one who pays the price. Sakara has aptly illustrated its nature by crying out that he and the rake are like two hounds following a jackal, and that he is burnt with love for Vasantasena, like a piece of old leather fallen on burning embers.

9-B. Vatsala Rasa.

Vatsala is also beautifully illustrated by Bhasa in several plays. Dasaratha's love for Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, shown in Act II of *Pratima;* and Rama's love for Bharata, and Lakshmana's love for Rama in that play, fall under this head. Duryodhana's love for his father, mother and child, in the *Urubhanga,* is a further example. Bhasa has finely illustrated the strength of this sentiment in Duryodhana's asking, on his death bed, a favour from his mother, and when she tells him that he might ask for anything he liked, he says "With folded hands, I ask, oh

mother, if I have earned any merit at all, may I be born as your son in another birth !" Bhima's love for Ghatotkacha, in *Madhyamavyayoga*, and the love of Dhritarashtra and Arjuna for Abhimanyu, and Ravana's love for Indrajit will all fall under this head. So, too, the love of Maitreya for Charudatta, Santhushta for Avimaraka, and Vasantaka for Udayana.

Other great qualities.

The other great qualities of Bhasa are his felicity of language, flight of fancy, soundness of judgment, profound psychological insight into the workings of the human mind in various strata of life, sturdy patriotism, love of justice and liberty, hatred of foreign yoke, desire for peace, honour, human dignity and self-respect, vivid pen-pictures of natural phenomena, and robust optimism. Nothing can exceed the optimism expressed in verse 18, Act I of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", namely that fire can be got out of wood, and water out of earth, and that nothing is impossible for man, provided he goes the right way about it. The epilogues of the plays almost always end with a fervent prayer for national independence and defeat of foreigners who seek to invade the country, in the very same spirit, as Shakespeare has written in *King John* :—

"This England never did, nor never shall
Lie at the proud feet of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself,
Now these her princes have come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them: nought shall make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true."

The opening scene in "The Vision of Vasavadatta", shows the indignation against sages being hustled for the sake of kings and princesses. Bhasa has, in many plays, expressed how the glory of kings is as ephemeral as the flickering of a snake's tongue, and how kings live only by the memory of their good rule and good works. When the soldier, who sought to kill Udayana in the Elephant Forest, slips in the blood-stained mire, Yaugandharayana exclaims that the land, which Udayana had protected from foreign invasion and from unrighteousness, has saved him in the time of his danger, thus showing the poet's belief that even inanimate things, like a country, will appreciate righteousness and reward it. Even Duryodhana is made to exclaim, in *Pancharatra*, "If troth be dead, all men are done. As troth stands firm, so do they !", thus echoing Manu's famous saying "He who

destroys righteousness will be destroyed by it, and he who upholds righteousness will be upheld by it !"

Profound Psychological Insight.

Bhasa's profound psychological insight is seen in almost every page of his plays. We shall take some instances. Yaugandharayana exclaims that an army without devotion is as useless in battle as a loveless wife in life's daily strife. He asks why one should worry about the branches after the trunk has been cut, and wonders what earthly use is served by taking good care of a jewel case after the jewel is gone. Verse 6 in Act IV of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" is one of the many instances of the profound psychological insight of this dramatist. It goes without saying that real sorrow has to be paid off in tears. Bhishma says, in *Pancharatra,* that women are valued according to their beauty, and men according to their prowess. Duryodhana is made to exclaim that no man or people can get independence, or a country to rule, for the mere asking, or by sheer begging, and that infinite sacrifices and readiness to undergo suffering are required. Sakuni says that corn will grow even in salty marshes if Yudhishtira were to be king, thus showing that countries become prosperous, not because of any inherent fertility, but because of good rule, England and Sweden being standing examples in modern times. Drona says that a pupil's fault comes home to the teacher. Duryodhana expresses the profound truth that it is absurd to say that only the dead go to heaven, or that heaven is invisible, and asserts that heaven is here, on this earth, for us to make good. Bhishma remarks that conciliation is the only remedy for the ill-behaved, anger only making them more obstinate.

In *Dutavakya,* Kamsa, who has conquered Fear, is shown as powerless against lust. This expresses the profound truth that many a man who knows no fear is still a slave of Lust.

The cowardly and bullying character of Sakara, in *Charudatta,* is another instance of such insight. Again, in *Pratima Nataka,* Dasaratha asks Sumantra what message Rama, Sita and Lakshmana had sent him, and Sumantra replies "Long they pondered, oh king, as if they would say something, but their lips trembled with words, their throats were paralysed with tears, and they went off into the forest without a word." That shows a perfect understanding of the psychological situation. Yaugandharayana's inability to tell Vijaya about Udayana's capture,

and his merely saying "It is thus"; and Vasantaka's inability to tell Padmavati, when met while bringing water in the lotus leaf, and his blabbering "This is that; that is this" also show this. So, too, Mahasena's persistent questioning, when told that Vatsaraja has been captured, and Bharata's unwillingness to ask about his father's statue in the Statue House, and going on repeating his questions about the statues of the three remoter ancestors; and Mahasena's remarking that a mother is ashamed if her daughter remains unmarried, and is, therefore, anxious for her marriage, and, yet, her heart is torn asunder when that very marriage brings about separation from her daughter.

Vivid Descriptions of Nature.

Vivid descriptions of natural phenomena are very frequent in Bhasa's plays. The burning midday sun of India is described in *Avimaraka* as follows:—"And now, the sun, with a thousand rays, begins to corrode the body of man. Ah, how dreadful is the heat! The earth is burning hot, as if in a high fever. All its moisture has been sucked up by the rays of the sun. The trees, as if harbouring forest fires, have been robbed of their shade, and spit out discoloured and withered leaves as if suffering from consumption. The mountains, gaping with their big caverns, cry helplessly for water. Hot winds cover the place with burning sand and dust. The world, baked by the sun's rays, has fallen into a swoon."

The description of the sunset in Act I, verse 16 of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", and Act III, verse 23 of *Abhisheka* is vivid, true to nature, and lifelike. The sunset and the setting in of night are described beautifully in *Avimaraka* as follows:—"The sun has set. The eastern quarter is tinged with black, while the West gleams with the evening red. The sky between is divided into two, and attains the beauty of Siva in his form of *Ardhanarisvara,* half god, half goddess. Ah, what a wonderful thing the world is! At dusk, it would seem to put on another guise. It wipes from its brow the *tilak* of the sun and puts on the wreath of stars. It exchanges the burning heat of the day for the cool delicious breeze, and changes from the world of work and trade into a world of interlaced lovers and prowling robbers!"

In *Urubhanga,* Aswathama asks Duroyodhana why he is sinking like the setting sun plunging into the twilight.

Moonrise is described in Act I, verse 29 of *Charudatta* thus:—"Here rises the moon, the night—light of the sky's highway, the beacon of young women, pale yellow like ripe dates. Its

white beams fall in the darkness like streams of milk on dried-up mire." The setting of the moon is described in Act III, verse 3, thus:—" The crescent moon gives place to darkness and sets, like the curved tusks of a wild elephant gradually summerging in a pool, as the animal plunges in the water."

Nature is shown as affecting human beings according to their moods and feelings. Thus, Avimaraka, when going to meet Kurangi at her invitation, and in a most joyous mood, exclaims "Ah, what a wonderful thing the world is!", but says, when forced to leave the palace and his beloved, that the trees are consumptive, the mountains are crying with pain, and the whole world in a swoon!

The driving of a fast chariot is described in *Pratima* thus:—" Trees appear to race towards it, so swiftly is their distance reduced by its motion. The ground runs down into the hollow betwixt the wheels, like an agitated stream. The spokes cannot be seen because of the speed, and appear as solid circles. The dust raised by the steeds never goes in front, and is always left behind."

The description of a hermitage in Act I, verse 12 of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" is striking and true.

The description of the night is one of the strongest points of Bhasa. The darkness of the midnight hour, when Krishna is born, is described by Vasudeva, in *Balacharita,* as follows:—" Darkness anoints my limbs. The sky, it seems, is raining lamp-black. My sight is useless, like service rendered to a rascal. The quarters are invisible, and the trees form one solid mass. The familiar world is utterly transformed."

In *Avimaraka,* the night is described as follows:—Ah, how fearsome is the middle of the night! For now, all creatures are unconscious in their slumber, like babes in the womb. The palaces, with people silent, fast asleep, seem sunk in meditation. Swallowed up by the encircling gloom, the trees can be detected only by the touch. With its outlines blurred, the whole world is invisible. The streets are streams that bear along the darkness, the lines of houses look like shoals, the ten quarters are merged in gloom. This darkness one could swim across." It is added that men roam in it, moved by love or greed or passion. The rake in *Charudatta* exclaims that the pitch darkness of the night does not deter him, as his character is blacker still, and, so, the night being lighter, he can travel through any lane.

The clouds are described in *Avimaraka* as follows:—" Beauteous are these dark-blue clouds, like dancers acting many

parts to the drumming of the thunder in the rains. They are the kine of Indra; they are the curtains of the hosts of stars. They are ant-hill homes of those female snakes called the lightning flashes. They are bushes growing on the celestial road. They are hones for the love god's arrows. They are the water jars, bringing alms gathered from the sea, for bathing the mountains. They are the shutters to shut out the sun and the moon. They are the cisterns of heaven's shower bath."

The ocean is described in the *Abhisheka* as follows:—"Here sleeps, my lord, the ocean, on a sapphire blue bed, canopied with rainy clouds, wearing beautiful garlands of billows breaking into foam, and possessed of a thousand arms in the shape of rivers."

A bird's eye view of the world by a flying Vidyadhara, high up in the sky, is given in *Avimaraka*:—"Mighty mountains look like little elephants, and seas like bathing pools; big rivers are like mere boundary marks; trees resemble duckweeds; all the hollows on the surface of the earth have disappeared; the big white mansions look like glistening dew drops."

VIGNETTES FROM LIFE.

Youth is described as "full of passion and recklessness. It takes no heed of difficulties. It has no respect for law. It is self-willed, and, its impetuosity overrules the intelligence. It is dangerous—but delightful."

Policemen are described as going along the highroad with lanterns, and burglars as taking refuge in rogues' halls in the dark corners near the cross-roads!

In *Pratima,* Ayodhya, after the departure of Rama, is described thus:—"Lordly elephants refuse to have their feed; the chargers stand without a neigh, tears in their eyes; the city folk, men and women, old and young, have no thought of food or desire for gossip. With sad faces, they wail aloud and keep on gazing at the way Rama goes with his wife and brother."

After the departure of Rama, Dasaratha exclaims: "Rama has gone like the sun; Lakshmana has gone after him, like the day following the sun; and Sita has disappeared with them like a shadow which disappears with the sun and the day. Why did not Fate make me childless, or Rama the son of another monarch, or Kaikeyi a tigress in the jungle ?". When Sumantra returns with the chariot, the king says "If the chariot has come back empty, without those three darlings, it is clear that Death has sent its chariot to fetch Dasaratha." He repeats the names of the three at first as Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, and then says

"That's not right. It must be Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, so that Sita may be well protected on both sides."

Bharata's anticipations on his return home, after a long sojourn in the hills, are vivid: "How my mind hurries ahead, eager to see my kinsfolk ! I bow my head at my father's feet; he raises me up; my brethren hasten to me; the tears of my mothers wet me. 'How well he looks', 'How, tall and strong he has grown !' say the servants, complimenting me. I see Lakshmana cutting jokes at my hill dialect and out-landish dress."

The charioteer says to himself "I cannot tell him the truth. Who will relate the triple evil, his father's death, his mother's lust for power, and the exile of his elder brother ?"

Dasaratha's three ancestors and Dasaratha are vividly described thus by the keeper of the Statue House:—"This is Dilipa who kindled the lamp of the sacred law; this is Raghu whose rising and sleeping were accompanied by the chanting of sacred hymns by thousands of Brahmans; this is Aja who abdicated his throne and kingdom from grief at separation from his beloved wife, and took to the forest for doing penance; this is Dasaratha who yielded up both life and realm as a bridal fee."

The scene of Sita's watering the plants raised by her in the Ashram in Janasthana before her capture by Ravana is delightful. Rama watches her doing so, and remarks that this lady, who was wearied by holding the mirror in the palace, was carrying heavy water jars, and that a forest life would make even delicate ladies as hard as creepers. After the rescue of Sita, she returns to Janasthana and again waters the trees. She exclaims how formerly she was able to see every leaf by looking down, and how she has to look up now to see them. Rama says "Such are the ups and downs in this world."

Rama and Bharata resemble in appearance and voice so closely that even Sita and Lakshmana momentarily mistake Bharata for Rama. But, the forest deer are startled at the sight of Bharata though they freely approach Rama.

An aged tortoise, which had seen Sita at Janasthana before her captivity, gazes at her just as before, after her return. There is no change in its attitude. But, Sita exclaims "It is too good to be true", and trembles violently at the mention of the golden deer.

HAUNTING PHRASES.

Maitreya decribes Charudatta's state as pitiful, like that of the glorious moon which has lost all its light at dawn. Charudatta

himself describes a poor man as living and moving about in a body which is as good as dead. He exclaims that the loss of riches, by itself, means nothing, if it does not mean also the loss of friends who become indifferent to a man who has become poor. He says that the return of prosperity to a man after a spell of adversity is like the gift of a lamp to one lost in darkness. He adds that, however virtuous a poor man may be, many evil deeds are attributed to him, even by honest people, owing to suspicions generated by his impecuniosity. But, a votary of truth, he adds " A man can never be termed wholly poor who has a devoted wife and a faithful friend. "

An expert burglar is described, in *Charudatta,* as " a cat to leap, a wolf to slink away, a snake to glide, a hawk to pounce, illusion itself in disguise, a wind on land, a boat on water, light in darkness, darkness in light, and an instrument to gauge the degree of the slumber of each householder. "

In *Madhyamavyayoga,* the Brahman parents of the son sought to be made a victim are said to be as terrified as a bull and cow when a tiger has pounced on their calf.

In *Pancharatra,* a wicked son is said to destroy a family like one dried-up tree destroying a whole forest in a forest fire. The five senses are said to depart from a dead man like snakes jumping out of an ant-hill on fire. The fire dying for lack of fuel is compared to generosity failing for lack of funds. Bhishmaka is decribed as "the iron bolt of Deccan's doorway." The dying Duryodhana is described, in *Urubhanga,* by his father, in grief, as " the broken bolt of a door. " The description of a faithful wife, *Sita,* in Pratima, is striking. She is said to follow Rama, as the shadow the sun, and to go with him through thick and thin, like the moonlight following the moon even during the eclipse, the entwining creeper falling along with the forest tree round which it is entwined, the female elephant rushing into the quagmire along with its beloved tusker. In Act IV, verse 4-a " The Vision of Vasavadatta ", we get another exquisite description of the faithful wife. In *Charudatta,* when Sakara asks the rake why he respects the pauper Charudatta, a veritable dried-up tank, the rake replies, " No doubt, he is veritably like a dried-up tank now. But, don't forget that it got dried-up in quenching men's thirsts."

ACTABILITY OF PLAYS.

One very strong point about Bhasa's plays is their extreme actability. The dialogues are crisp, the style flowing, and to the

point, and the action brisk and striking. Indeed, such is this dramatist's eagerness about the progress of the action and cutting out of all matter not contributing thereto that many persons walk in unannounced, many are only referred to, many are not on the stage when spoken to, and many "go and return" almost at once, getting the information wanted in much less time than really required.

Bhasa has got an extraordinary skill at vivid descriptions of episodes and events and characters without depicting them or bringing them on the stage, and creates in the minds of the audience an illusion that these have been depicted or seen. Thus, Udayana and Vasavadatta are never brought on the stage in "Yaugandharayana's Vows", and yet, we feel that they are always there, and the scene in the Elephant forest, the change of shoulders in the Sylph's temple, the love-making in the prison, and the lessons on the lute are as vivid as if they had been played ten times over on the stage. So too, the king's lament over Vasavadatta's supposed death, narrated by the student, Salankayana, Aruni, the Queen-Mother of Vatsa, the King and Queen of Magadha, and a hundred others never appear on the stage, and yet, we know who they are, and their individuality stands out like that of a Himalayan peak on a cloudless morning. Not only are battles and events described by narrators appearing on the stage, like Hamsaka, Vasantaka and others, but they are described even in casual messages, as that of Angaravati to Udayana, showing how she and Mahasena had taken him captive to Ujjain only to make him wed Vasavadatta, and had, for that purpose, entrusted her to him on the ostensible pretext of learning the lute.

LOVE OF INDIA.

Another great quality of Bhasa is his staunch support of Indian culture and love of India, though he belongs to the whole world, and not to India alone. Like Shakespeare, who was "not of an Age but for All Time" but gloried in his England to such an extent that King Edward VIII said of him "Shakespeare was above all things an Englishman", Bhasa, too, gloried in his India, while being a citizen of the world. To such an extent was he an advocate of India and its culture that, in *Abhisheka Nataka* he deliberately chose a weak argument, based on the *Sastras*, for putting into the mouth of Rama. In answer to Vali's query why he alone was killed, and not Sugriva, too,

since he was also guilty of adultery with his brother's wife, Rama replies that, under the *Sastras,* marriage with a younger brother's wife was far more reprehensible than marriage with an elder brother's wife, and Vali says that this is an unanswerable argument, though none but an orthodox Hindu will be prepared to agree with this. Bhasa deliberately preferred a *national* argument to the two strong arguments applicable to all nations, which he himself has suggested in the play, by making Vali declare that even if Vishnu were to aid Sugriva, he would kill him, and also by showing him as an ardent devotee who would never fight the Lord. Of course, a cosmopolitan would have made Rama reply that, after this challenge to Vishnu's power, Vishnu was bound to see that Sugriva, who was about to be killed by Vali, was not killed, and, had, therefore, perforce to kill Vali. Or he would have said that, as Vali would fall at his feet, if seen, and could not be killed, this mode of killing had to be resorted to. Bhasa's pride in the Indian king ruling from sea to sea, with the Himalayas and the Vindhyas as ear-pendants, and crushing the foreigners will make every Indian's heart beat with responding pride, just as Shakespeare's praise of "this precious stone set in the silver sea, this blessed spot, this earth, this realm, this England" makes an Englishman's heart beat with pride.

NATIONALISM JUSTIFIED.

We love Bhasa both for his cosmopolitanism and for his nationalism, and his cosmopolitanism is welcome only because of his nationalism, just as our love of earth, water, fire, air or sky is greatest when that bit of water, earth, air, fire or sky is part of our own possession. To be on our own plot of earth; to bathe in our own private pool; to enjoy the air in our own park; to have our own lighting installation, and to watch the sky and the stars from our own terrace—these have been the greatest delights of men throughout the ages. The beggar profits not from these universal elements, unless he can claim ownership in a bit of them as his own. That may be because we are earth-earthy, but that will always be so, as long as man is man.

BHASA AND KALIDASA.

I shall close this section with a comparison of Bhasa with the other great dramatist of India, Kalidasa, who had read Bhasa deeply, and has, consciously or unconsciously, reproduced many

famous scenes and ideals from Bhasa, in his plays, like *Sakuntala, Vikramorvasiya* and *Malavikagnimitra*, and other works, like *Meghasandesa* and *Raghuvamsa*. Bhasa's mind belonged to the Vedas and early puranas. It was theological, satisfied and optimistic. Kalidasa lived in other times, when the waters of India's cultural stream had become deeper and more turbid, and thought more complicated, and the Vedic nature gods were being displaced by highly metaphysical conceptions of Vishnu, Siva and Sakti. So, we do not find in Kalidasa the mere prayer to the old or new gods, taking faith in them as accepted, as in Bhasa. Instead, we find metaphysical challenges thrown at a sceptical world to convert it into belief. The invocatory verse in Sakuntala, for instance, indirectly asks the atheist why he should be troubled about proofs of the existence of God, when there are eight direct pieces of evidence for His existence, in the earth, which supports all life; the air, which pervades all space; the fire which purifies and carries the offerings; the water which is the first of created things, being the creation of a new thing by a combination of two quite different things; the sun and the moon which regulate time; the sky on which everything is rooted, but whose root itself is not visible or perceptible; and the sacrificer who works for others' good. Kalidasa does not ask "Are there not Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Agni, Varuna, Indra?", as Bhasa would have asked. Other times had come; other beliefs had gained ground; other modes of approach were required.

So, too, Bhasa's king is an autocrat working, no doubt, for the good of his people, according to the rules of righteousness, if he wanted his name to survive. Kalidasa's king is one who acts according to the wishes of his subjects. The concluding verse in Sakuntala runs:—"Let the king work for the good of his subjects and go by their wishes; let the advice of wise and learned men of religion be honoured everywhere; let the self-created, blue-throated Siva cancel my rebirth." Bhasa stood for absolute monarchy, simple goodness, and unbounded optimism. Kalidasa stood for democratic monarchy, goodness based on knowledge, and a reasoned pessimism.

Bhasa is like the blue Jumna, with its limpid waters, a delight to see and lave in, but powerless to kill disease germs. Kalidasa is like the dark, turbid, mysterious Ganges, perilous to bathe or sport in, but, despite all its dirt, able to kill disease germs in the fraction of a second. Where these two rivers meet is the most sacred spot in India, the *Triveni*. So, too, it is

in the combination of Bhasa and Kalidasa that Indian Drama will be seen at its best. Suffice it that, in modern India, overloaded with pessimism and with the complexities of metaphysical thought, and revelling in Sakti and Kali, even as Kalidasa did, the teachings of Bhasa, with their simple faith in Vishnu, have an added value, just as, when the pendulum is at one end, it must swing to the other end, to restore the correct equilibrium. No teaching is more valuable for India to-day than the strident teaching of Bhasa:—"Children of the land between the Himalayas and the sea, rightly-directed effort will always succeed. There is nothing impossible for man, and, therefore, for you. Rise up and fulfil your dharma. Honour your father and mother, teacher and guest, and this India of ours with its eternal *Dharma*, and rise to your full stature as human beings."

THESE TWO PLAYS ARE BHASA'S.

The two plays in this book were undoubtedly written by Bhasa. As already seen, Rajasekhara specifically refers to *Svapna Vasavadatta* as the best play of Bhasa, which was left unburnt. Abhinavagupta refers to the "*Krida*" (most probably the ball game which we find in Act II) in "*Svapna Vasavadatta.*" So, too, Saradatanaya, whose discussion of the entire plot of a *Svapna Nataka* seems to be based on this play. Bhoja Deva, in his *Sringaraprakasa,* has mentioned some incidents from a *Svapna Nataka* which must refer only to the scene in the Ocean Pavilion in Act V of our *Svapna Vasavadatta*. Sarvananda also refers to *Svapna Vasavadatta,* though by some textual error, it is described as a drama of the *Kama Sringara* type (love marriage) instead of a drama of the *Artha Sringara* type (political marriage). Even if there is no textual error, it may be that the reference to *Kama Sringara* is to Vasavadatta's marriage with Udayana, about which there are copious references in this play, which marriage, of course, was of the *Kama Sringara* type. Ramachandra and Gunachandra have, in their *Natyadarpana,* mentioned *Svapna Vasavadatta* specifically, as a play by Bhasa, and have referred to the *sephalika* flowers and the stone bench found in Act IV. Sagaranandin appears to have summarised the Prelude to Act I of this Play, though in his own words. In the *Sakuntala Vyakhya,* we find the very words from the Prelude to Act I quoted. Vamana has quoted verse 3 in Act IV in his *Kavyalankarasutravritta*.

As regards *Pratijna Yaugandharayana,* too Bhamaha's criticism clearly refers to it. He attacks, as contrary to

commonsense, Udayana's mistaking the artificial elephant for a real one, and Mahasena's troops, many of whom Udayana had killed, leaving Udayana unkilled, despite some of the slain being their brothers, sons, fathers, uncles, etc. Of course, Bhamaha's criticism is pointless. A clumsy wooden elephant with a covering of leather will not deceive any one, but a cleverly made elephant, something like a model in Madame Tassaud's, can easily deceive even experts, especially when masked by a herd of real elephants. So, too when Mahasena wanted Udayana to be captured alive to bow to him, there is nothing unnatural in his minister Salankayana's intervening and preventing his troops from killing him. In those days, the king's commands prevailed over the subjects' likes and dislikes. Bhamaha appears to have been a pedantic critic, asking too much from human nature, and believing implicitly in the supposed logical workings of the human mind. He would have rejected the story of the Wooden Horse of Troy, and would have been surprised at Napoleon's not being killed by the British when he sought refuge in the *Bellerophon* after killing so many relatives of the English soldiers.

For some reason I have been unable to understand, Mr. Pusalker thinks that, in *Pratijna Yaugandharayana*, the elephant is a *real one*, and that the warriors are not hidden inside it, but are found concealed in the surrounding thickets, and that the Elephant Forest is in the Avanti country of Mahasena. The specific words '*Prachchhanda*' and '*Kritakahasti*' show that the elephant was an artificial one. There is also no doubt that the warriors were concealed in it. There is still less doubt that the Elephant Forest was in the Vatsa country, as, otherwise, there will be no point in Rumanvan's telling Udayana that the frontiers are difficult to govern, and that the frontier people are shameless and low-born, or in verse 9 of Act I of "Yaugandharayana's Vows." It is obvious that the point of that verse is that, in return for Udayana's protecting the Vatsa country from foreign invasion, and preserving intact the *Varnasramadharma* within its limits, that country protected him at the time of his danger. The Avanti country was not ruled by him, or protected by him from foreign invasion, or from the disturbance of the Varnasrama system, and the verse would have been highly inappropriate, if the Elephant Forest was in the Avanti country.

The references to the events in "Yaugandharayana's Vows" in "The Vision of Vasavadatta" are so numerous that both the plays were undoubtedly written by the same person. So, the

positive proof that Bhasa wrote "The Vision of Vasavadatta" will also be conclusive proof that he wrote "Yaugandharayana's Vows", though nobody seems to have named that play specifically as a work of Bhasa.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PLAYS.

These two plays, though forming one continuous whole, differ *inter se* in their nature. "Yaugandharayana's Vows" is a masculine play, the only two women appearing on the stage being Vijaya and Angaravati, and not occupying much of the stage either. Wars and hunts, plots and conspiracies, vows and challenges, drinks and killings, figure prominently in this play. The main sentiment is heroism, though the sentiments of surprise, anger and sarcasm also figure therein, with the sentiment of love kept as an under-current in the narration, by the jester of Vatsaraja's love for Vasavadatta. Though the play is named after Yaugandharayana, the hero is Vatsaraja and the heroine Vasavadatta, and the astounding fact is that neither of them appears on the stage, albeit an illusion is created in the minds of the audience that they are always there. "The Vision of Vasavadatta" on the other hand, is essentially feminine, and deals with the softer emotions of love, pity, and sorrow, though, of course, other sentiments also figure, notably, surprise, sarcasm, and serenity.

BOTH BASED ON FOLKLORE.

These two plays are based upon the folklore of Ancient India and relate to the adventures of King Udayana of Vatsa. Unfortunately, we do not have the version of this story which prevailed in the 4th century B.C., the time of Bhasa. But, it is probable that the folklore version was reproduced fairly correctly in the *Brihat Katha* of Gunadhya, and later on, with some minor variations, in the *Katha Sarit Sagara* of Somadeva. If that is so, Bhasa has changed many material details and enhanced the beauty of the story and its suitability for drama, just as Shakespeare has similarly changed the crude stories of *Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth* and *Othello* when writing those famous Plays.

FOLKLORE STORY.

I give below a summary of the folklore story, as it is found in the *Katha Sarit Sagara,* and shall, later on, mention briefly the chief changes made by our dramatist, and their significance. For the sake of convenience, I divide the story into four Parts.

The folk-lore story runs as follows:—

PART I.

(*The events antecedent to "Yaugandharayana's Vows."*)

There was a famous King called Satanika,[6] a descendant of the Pandavas, ruling over the Vatsa country, with his capital at Kausambi. He had a son called, Sahasranika,[7] who married Mrigavati,[8] a daughter of the King of Kosala. When she was in the family way, she was subject to those inexplicable yearnings of ladies in that condition. One day, she felt a desire to bathe in a tank of blood. The King, being a righteous man, did not like to kill even animals to satisfy her craving, but, all the same, wanted to gratify her wishes. So, he had the queen's bath filled with the Indian lac, looking so similar to blood. The queen did not, of course, see the difference, and got into the bath to bathe.

When she was in the bath, she looked like a piece of meat floating in blood, to a huge roc bird flying about. It quickly pounced on her, and carried her away to the Udayagiri hills (now in the Ganjam Agency). On putting her on a peak, the bird saw, to its disgust, that it was a live human being, and not a piece of raw meat, and left her there, and flew away.

The queen, realising the justice of the punishment she had received for her desire to bathe in blood, was heart-broken, with grief, and wanted to hurl herself down a precipice, but desisted because of the child in the womb. A young disciple of the sage Jamadagni,[9] whose hermitage was near, passed that way, heard her agonising cries of sorrow, ascertained her story, and led her to the hermitage. There, she delivered a charming boy. At the time of his birth, a voice was heard from heaven:— "A King of great renown has been born, Udayana by name, and his son shall be the king of the Vidyadharas!"[10]

The boy grew in size and strength in the hermitage, and became the darling of all the inmates. Mrigavati took off from

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[6] "A man with a hundred battalions." He is referred to by the Buddha as a pure blue-blooded Kshatriya monarch of his days.

[7] "A man with a thousand battalions."

[8] "Fawn-eyed."

[9] Father of Parasurama. There is a hot sulphur spring at this spot, the Taptapani Ghat, even now.

[10] A class of semi-divine beings.

her own wrist a bracelet marked with the name of Sahasranika, and put it on his wrist. Jamadagni himself taught the boy all the arts. Udayana roamed about, alone, in the forest, playing with deer and other wild animals, and fearless of anything on earth.

One day, he saw a huge snake captured by a Savara.[11] He asked the man to let the snake go, but he replied "I can't do so, my boy. I eke out my livelihood by selling snakes like this." Udayana then gave him his bracelet, and asked him to set the snake free. The overjoyed Savara at once did so, and went away with the bracelet.

The snake, which had been released, was a divine one, called Vasunemi, brother of Vasuki.[12] It gave Udayana, in token of its appreciation of his generosity in procuring its freedom, a divine lute called Ghoshavati, gifted to it by its brother, Vasuki, who had got it from Siva, the Lord of Music, as a present. That lute had many strings, divided according to half-tones and quarter-tones, and had the sweetest sounds ever produced by musical instruments, sounds which could captivate the wildest elephant and make it tame as a lamb. The snake taught Udayana the secret of playing on it exquisitely. It also gave him a magic formula which, if communicated to his loving wife, would render the betel leaf used by her ever green, the garland strung by her remain unfaded, and the *tilak*[13] mark put by her ever distinct. Then, it disappeared, and Udayana returned to the hermitage with its gifts.

The Savara went to the nearest town to sell the bracelet, and was at once arrested by a policeman, and taken to Kausambi and produced before the King, as the bracelet had his mark on it. Instead of punishing the man, the wise King questioned him, and ascertained from him wherefrom he had got it, and followed him to Udayagiri, to the hermitage of Jamadagni. The Sage welcomed the King, and handed over Mrigavati and Udayana to him. The King was overjoyed at having such a fine son. In course of time, he had him anointed as Crown Prince, and gave him as advisers Vasantaka, Rumanvan and Yaugandhara-

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[11] The Savaras are an aboriginal tribe still occupying those hills. They are referred to by Pliny.

[12] A divine snake which was used to churn the Sea of Milk and was a favourite with all gods.

[13] A ceremonial crimson mark put by married Hindu ladies on their foreheads|

yana, sons of his own ministers. In due course, Sahasranika retired with his wife, Mrigavati, to a hermitage in the Himalayas, following the immemorial custom of the Aryas,[14] after crowning Udayana King.

Udayana at first applied himself to his royal duties, and ruled his subjects well. But, gradually, he began to entrust the government to his ministers, and spend almost his whole time in hunting wild elephants, captivating them with the enchanting music of Ghoshavati. He was merry and care-free, and had only one anxiety. He kept on thinking "Nowhere is a wife found equal to me in birth and appearance. Only Vasavadatta is a fit mate for me. She likes me, too, by what I hear. But, how is she to be obtained?"

The then King of Avanti was a powerful monarch whom all the neighbouring kings obeyed, except Udayana. He had his capital at Ujjaini, and had a mighty army which had secured for him his title, Mahasena. He was also called *Chanda* Mahasena, or the Terrible Mahasena. By doing severe penance in honour of the Ujjaini Mahakali,[15] he received from that goddess a divine sword which made him invincible to his enemies. He married a Daitya[16] maiden, and had, by her, two sons, Gopalaka and Palaka. One day, he gave a splendid banquet to Indra, the Lord of the Devas.[17] In return, Indra gave him a boon that he would have a daughter of matchless beauty and virtue. In due course, this girl was born, and was named Vasavadatta or "Indra's gift."

When Vasavadatta attained marriageable age, Mahasena thought to himself:— "There is no fit husband in the world for my daughter except Udayana, and he has ever been my enemy. How can I make him my son-in-law and submissive ally? He wanders about alone in the forest, capturing wild elephants with his lute. I shall take advantage of this failing of his, and entrap him and bring him here by a strategem. Then, I shall pretend to make my daughter his pupil in music, an art in which he is an adept. He will, doubtless, fall a victim to her charms, the moment he sees her, and he will surely become my son-in-law and obedient ally."

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[14] The Aryans.

[15] The wife of Mahakala, or Lord of Time, Siva.

[16] A kind of powerful demons, noted for the bravery of their men and the beauty of their women.

[17] The shining ones, the gods.

In spite of this decision, he resolved to try negotiations at first, before stooping to a trick. He sent an ambassador to Udayana with the message " My daughter wants to become your pupil in music. If you love us, come here and teach her. " The proud Udayana, following the Kshatriya custom of one king never obeying another's call, sent a reply " If your daughter desires to become my pupil, send her here. ", which, of course, was an insult to Mahasena. Udayana also told his ministers " I shall go and bring Mahasena here in chains for his impudence in asking me to go, as a music teacher, to his city. " Yaugandharayana told him that Mahasena was a mighty monarch who could not be subdued by him, and that his object was neither proper nor feasible. He added that Mahasena could not be conquered by Udayana because of his great army, and the difficult country through which Avanti had to be reached.

Mahasena's messenger went back with the reply of Udayana, and Mahasena found that strategem alone would succeed. So, he made a large artificial elephant, like his own elephant, Nalagiri, filled it with trained warriors, and placed it in an elephant forest in the Vindhyas.

PART II.

(*The events covered by "Yaugandharayana's Vows."*)

Udayana's scouts discovered this elephant from a distance, returned to their master, and informed him "We have seen a single elephant roaming in the Vindhya forest. Nowhere in the world is its equal to be found. " The king spent that night thinking "If I obtain that mighty elephant, a match for Mahasena's elephant, Nalagiri, surely, Mahasena will come into my power, and will offer me his daughter, Vasavadatta, in marriage. " So, in the morning, he started for the Vindhya forest, disregarding the advice of his ministers, and the prediction of the astrologers that the position of the heavenly bodies at the moment of his departure portended the acquisition of a maiden together with imprisonment.

When he reached the Vindhya forest, he made his troops halt at a distance, and, accompanied by scouts only, entered the elephant forest with his melodious lute, Ghoshavati. On the southern slope of the Vindhya range, he saw the false elephant, looking like a real one. It was pointed out to him by his scouts from a distance. He silently approached it, alone, playing on his lute, thinking how he should bind it, and singing melodious tunes.

As his mind was concentrated on his music, and the shades of the evening were falling, he did not see that the supposed wild elephant was an artificial one. When he neared it, a body of soldiers in full armour suddenly issued from the elephant, and surrounded him. The king drew his hunting knife, and fought fiercely. But, while he was fighting with those in front of him, he was seized by those from behind. Those troops then carried him to Ujjaini.

Mahasena himself met his captive with the utmost respect, and entered the city of Ujjaini with him. Shortly thereafter, he made over his daughter, Vasavadatta, to him, and said to him "Prince, teach this lady music. In this way, you will obtain a happy issue to your adventure. Do not grieve."

When he saw Vasavadatta, Udayana's mind was so steeped in love that he forgot his anger and grief. He dwelt in the concert hall in Mahasena's palace, in the inner apartments, teaching Vasavadatta to sing, and with his eyes constantly fixed on hers.

Meanwhile, the men who had accompanied Udayana to the forest returned to Kausambi. The calm and resolute Yaugandharayana made Rumanvan take charge of the Government of the country, and went to Ujjaini, accompanied by Vasantaka. On the way, Yaugandharayana, by a magic charm, altered his own shape. He became deformed, hunch-backed and old, and looked like a madman. By means of that very charm, he gave Vasantaka, a body with outstanding veins, protruding belly, ugly mouth and projecting teeth.

Yaugandharayana entered Ujjaini, singing and dancing, and made his way to the king's palace followed by a crowd. Vasavadatta heard him, and sent a maid to take him to the music hall. There, he made a secret sign to Udayana, who at once recognized him as Yaugandharayana, and sent Vasavadatta out of the room on some pretext, and had a long and undisturbed talk with his minister. Yaugandharayana then communicated to the king spells for breaking the chains, and charms for winning Vasavadatta's love. Then, he went out. When Vasavadatta returned, Udayana induced her to summon Vasantaka who was waiting at the door of the palace. Vasantaka amused Vasavadatta by telling her funny stories, and secured her favour.

As time went on, Vasavadatta felt a great affection for Udayana, and began to take sides with him against her own father. Yaugandharayana went to the palace again, and saw Udayana,

making himself invisible to all others there. Then, he told Udayana, in the presence of only Vasantaka, "King, you were made captive by Mahasena by means of a trick. He now wishes to give you his daughter in marriage and set you at liberty, treating you with all honour. Let us carry away his daughter, and escape before this marriage. In this way, we shall revenge ourselves upon this haughty monarch, by putting him to disgrace. He has given Vasavadatta a female elephant called Bhadravati. No elephant except Nalagiri is able to excel her in speed. The driver of this elephant is a man of this place, called Ashadaka, and I have won him over to our side by giving him much wealth. You must mount that elephant with Vasavadatta, fully armed, and start from this place secretly by night." Udayana remembered carefully all these instructions, and, when Vasavadatta came, told her what Yaugandharayana had told him. She agreed to the proposal, and resolved to elope with him. They made good their escape from Ujjaini, having successfully overcome the obstacles on the way, and arrived safely at Kausambi.

PART III.

(*Events between "Yaugandharayana's Vows" and the "Vision of Vasavadatta."*)

Shortly thereafter, Mahasena and his queen sent Gopalaka with their good wishes to Udayana. Udayana then celebrated his marriage with Vasavadatta, and considered himself the luckiest of men. But, in course of time, he became faithless to Vasavadatta, and renewed his intrigues with a lady-in-waiting, called Virachita, with whom he had an affair before. One day, by a slip of the tongue, he addressed Vasavadatta as "darling Virachita." Thereupon, she became infuriated, and he had to make his peace with her by falling at her feet, and promising to leave off his connection with Virachita, who was then forgiven by the queen at his instance.

As the years rolled on, Udayana neglected the Government of his country, and gave himself up to his own pleasures, mostly hunting. Yaugandharayana was sad at this, as he considered that it was the duty of the ministers to make Udayana the Emperor of the World, the ambition of every Kshatriya King. So, he called the other ministers, and told them that they must do their king a good turn by getting for him, despite him, the Empire of the Earth. He added that the only obstacle to this was the King of Magadha, who was a foe in the rear, and was always attack-

ing from behind, and who should be won over by Udayana's marrying his daughter, Padmavati. He said to them "I have already requested him to give his daughter in marriage to our King. He replied 'I will not give my daughter, whom I love more than myself, to Udayana, as he is passionately attached to his wife, Vasavadatta'. So, we must conceal Vasavadatta somewhere, set fire to her house, and proclaim everywhere that the queen is burnt. In no other case will the King of Magadha give his daughter to our Sovereign, or our King marry another. But, if this is done, everything will go as we have planned." The other ministers were eventually won over to this plan, even Gopalaka being let into the secret and agreeing to it. The ministers then arranged for a grand hunt for Udayana in the Lavanaka district bordering Magadha, and resolved to burn Vasavadatta's apartments, and to have Vasavadatta taken and entrusted to Padmavati, so that the future Queen of Udayana might be a witness to Vasavadatta's virtuous conduct when in concealment.

PART IV.

(*The events covered by "The Vision of Vasavadatta."*)

Yaugandharayana and the other ministers accompanied Udayana and Vasavadatta to Lavanaka. One day, when the King had gone for his hunt, Yaugandharayana arranged everything. Then, he, Gopalaka, Rumanvan and Vasantaka went secretly to Vasavadatta, and, by appealing to her love for her lord and his glory, persuaded her to agree to their plan. Then, Yaugandharayana made her, by his magic charm, assume the appearance of a Brahmin woman, and made Vasantaka look like a Brahmin boy, and himself look like an aged Brahmin. Then, he took Vasavadatta, under the name of Avantika,[18] and Vasantaka, and proceeded to Rajagriha. Thereafter, Rumanvan burnt Vasavadatta's quarters with fire, and exclaimed aloud "Woe unto me! The Queen and Vasantaka are burnt!"

Yaugandharayana and Avantika reached Rajagriha. They saw Princess Padmavati in her garden and went towards her, but the guards tried to prevent them. Padmavati fell in love with Avantika, the moment she saw her, and ordered the guards to allow her party to approach her. Under the pretext that Avantika was his daugher, and had been deserted by her husband,

[18] Lady of Avanti.

Yaugandharayana left her in the care of Padmavati, and returned to Lavanaka. Then, Padmavati took with her Lady Avantika and Vasantaka, and entered her splendid palace. She soon perceived that Lady Avantika was a person of very high rank, and, suspecting her to be some exalted personage in concealment, entertained her with luxurious comforts to her heart's content.

When Udayana returned to Lavanaka, and saw Vasavadatta's apartments reduced to ashes, and heard from Rumanvan that the queen was burnt with Vasantaka, he rolled on the ground, and became unconscious. But, on seeing the behaviour of Yaugandharayana and Gopalaka, and on remembering the predictions of the astrologers, he suspected that the Queen might possibly be alive, and lived in the hope of being some day reunited with her.

The spies of the King of Magadha, who were at Lavanaka, went to their King, and told him everything about the fire and the death of Vasavadatta, just as Yaugandharayana had intended them to do. On hearing their reports, the King of Magadha was anxious to give his daughter in marriage to Udayana, and invited him to Rajagriha, and offered him her hand. On the advice of Yaugandharayana, Udayana accepted the offer, and was married to Padmavati with great pomp and ceremony. Yaugandharayana made the King of Magadha, on the happy marriage occasion, swear, by the God of Fire, never to injure Udayana. Vasavadatta remained unobserved in the palace, paying for the glory of her lord. Yaugandharayana was afraid that Udayana would see Vasavadatta, if he remained there, and prevailed upon him to leave the palace along with Padmavati and the army, immediately after the marriage.

Vasavadatta went secretly in the rear of the army making Vasantaka precede her. Udayana reached Lavanaka, and entered his own palace with Padmavati, but was thinking all the time of Vasavadatta. Vasavadatta went to the house of Gopalaka that night, and embraced him, and wept over her fate. Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan went there and consoled her.

Padmavati's servants went and told her "Oh Queen, Lady Avantika has arrived here, and has gone to the house of Gopalaka." When Padmavati heard this, she was agitated and alarmed, and, in the presence of Udayana, said to them "Go and tell Avantika that the Queen says 'You are a deposit in my hands. What business have you where you are? Come to me!" The king approached close to Padmavati, on seeing her agitation,

and was surprised to see her unfaded garlands and ever-distinct forehead mark. He asked her who was responsible for these. She said "It is all due to Lady Avantika, who has been entrusted to me by a Brahman."

No sooner did the King hear all this, than he set off for the house of Gopalaka, thinking that Lady Avantika would be none other than Vasavadatta. When he entered Gopalaka's house, he saw there Vasavadatta, Yaugandharayana, Rumanvan and Vasantaka in addition to Gopalaka. Udayana and Vasavadatta embraced each other, weeping over one another. Even Yaugandharayana's face was suffused with tears at this tender scene of the re-joining of the two lovers after their separation.

Padmavati, who then found out the truth about Vasavadatta, also burst into tears. Vasavadatta wept as if her heart would break, and exclaimed, with tears, "What use is there in my going on living and causing only sorrow to my husband?" Yaugandharayana then told Udayana "Oh King, I have done all this in order to make you the Emperor of the Earth, by marrying to you the daughter of the Sovereign of Magadha. Queen Vasavadatta is not in the slightest degree responsible for this trick. Queen Padmavati is witness to her virtuous conduct."

Then Padmavati, whose mind was free from the least trace of jealousy, said "I am ready to enter the fire[19] on the spot to prove her innocence and virtue." Vasavadatta also said "I must enter the fire, to clear the mind of the King[20] from suspicion". Then Yaugandharayana rinsed his mouth, and spoke as follows: "If I have been a benefactor to my King, and if the Queen is free from sin, speak, ye guardians of the world! Else, I shall die at once." Then, a heavenly voice was heard "Happy art thou, oh King, in having Yaugandharayana for minister, and Vasavadatta, who was a goddess in her former birth, as wife. Not the slightest blame attaches to her." Udayana and Gopalaka embraced Yaugandharayana for his resolute appeal to the guardians of the world, and Udayana considered that the whole earth was already subject to him. Thereafter, he lived a life of happiness and felicity, with his two wives whose affection for him was daily increasing.

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[19] A favourite ordeal with the Aryans, the most famous instance being Sita's entering the fire to prove her purity.

[20] Of course, his polygamy and unfaithfulness did not diminish his jealousy.

Changes made by Bhasa.

Bhasa has obviously made many changes from the folklore version. Almost all of them add to the beauty and dramatic effect of the story.

In "Yaugandharayana's Vows".

The main changes made in "Yaugandharayana's Vows" are the following. In the folklore version, Udayana is very anxious to marry Vasavadatta long before he sees her, and she is also represented as having fallen in love with him, an imitation of the story of Nala and Damayanti. Bhasa has, with true artistic instinct, changed this into a love at first sight, generated in Udayana at his seeing Vasavadatta without a veil, when the palanquin-bearers were changing shoulders. The exchange of pompous and taunting messages between Mahasena and Udayana regarding Vasavadatta's tuition in the lute by Udayana is omitted, and the engagement of Udayana as tutor is only hinted at in *Svapnavasavadatta* in Angaravati's message and by some beautiful verses about the tuition itself.

In the drama, Udayana sees Vasavadatta for the first time by accident, as stated above, and not when already appointed her music teacher with the clumsy words plainly hinting about his intended marriage with her. So, the element of romance is enhanced.

A series of changes has been made about the elephant episode. Instead of his own scouts informing Udayana about the false elephant, as in the folklore, a single foot-soldier (evidently a spy of Mahasena) informs him about it. A herd of real elephants is introduced to give verisimilitude to the artificial elephant. Udayana fights Mahasena's troops on his horse, Sundarapatala, and armed with a spear, instead of on foot and armed with a hunting knife. Twenty nobles of his also accompany him and fight and fall down dead. The king is then bound with creepers and twigs, and is not caught from behind when fighting his enemies in front, as in the folklore. The interesting accounts of the soldiers who bewailed the loss of their relatives, and of the single soldier who caught Udayana by his hair and sought to chop off his head, but slipped in the pools of blood and died, and of Salankayana who had been wounded earlier, but recovered consciousness at the critical moment and prevented further violence on Udayana, are not found in the folklore version, and are Bhasa's own creation.

No personal message is sent to Yaugandharayana in the folk-lore by Udayana, through Hamsaka, as here, and no vows to release Udayana are taken by Yaugandharayana. Yaugandharayana, in the folklore, describes Mahasena's army as powerful, and not as contemptible as in Act I, verse 4. The interesting passages about the auspicious cord and the Queen-Mother's message to Yaugandharayana are not to be found in the folklore. The undramatic passage in the folklore, that, just before Udayana started for the elephant forest, astrologers predicted that the position of the heavens indicated the acquisition of a bride along with imprisonment is omitted in the Play, as detrimental to the feeling of surprise which ought to be there. So too, in the play, Mahasena does not receive the prisoner Udayana and take him to the city with princely honours.

Yaugandharayana is, in the folk-lore, a great magic-worker possessing a charm by virtue of which he changes his own shape as well as Vasantaka's, becomes invisible, etc. In the Play, he changes his form by putting on clothes left behind by Dwaipayana, and not by any charm of his own. He is not said to have changed the form of Vasantaka. Rumanvan also goes to Ujjaini in the Play, and is not left behind at Kausambi, as in the folklore. Vasavadatta does not invite Yaugandharayana to the palace, as in the folklore, and Yaugandharayana does not have a long talk with Udayana, and tell him about all his schemes and designs, and teach Udayana charms by which to break chains, win Vasavadatta's love, etc. Nor does Yaugandharayana visit Udayana again and become invisible to all, except him and Vasantaka, and suggest the taking away of Vasavadatta to bring disgrace on Mahasena. Far more naturally, the three ministers conspire secretly in an out-of-the-way temple, when people do not move about in the vicinity, in various disguises, and go away by different doors when people begin to move about. Vasantaka alone meets the king and acts as intermediary between the king and Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan. And it is Udayana who suggests the taking away of Vasavadatta to bring disgrace on Mahasena, a plea not accepted by Yaugandharayana who is put out at it. In the folklore, the escape of Udayana is accomplished without a fight by Yaugandharayana to cover it, as in the Play. The folklore version makes Mahasena and his Queen send Gopalaka to Kausambi to convey to Udayana their good wishes, and makes Udayana celebrate the marriage there. The passage-at-arms between Yaugandharayana and Bharatarohaka, the attempted suicide of Angaravati, the touching episode about the

gift of a golden chalice to Yaugandharayana, and the marriage of the paintings of Vasavadatta and Udayana are all Bhasa's own creation.

In Svapnavasavadatta.

In *Svapnavasavadatta,* too, Bhasa has made equally great changes from the folklore story. Thus, in the folklore story, Yaugandharayana intends to make Udayana the Emperor of the World, despite himself, and it is for this purpose that he suggests the mythical destruction of Vasavadatta by fire, and brings about the marriage of Udayana with Padmavati. Though it was an Aryan ideal for ministers to make their monarchs conquer the whole world and perform the *Rajasuya* sacrifice, still, it is obvious that most of the audience would not approve of such acts by Yaugandharayana for such a purpose. Bhasa, with his profound knowledge of human nature, gave a twist to that story, and made Yaugandharayana do these horrible acts, causing infinite suffering and sorrow to Udayana and Vasavadatta, not for the sake of making Udayana the Emperor of the World, but, as he said, simply for saving Kausambi and the Vatsa country from the foul usurper, Aruni. It is obvious that most men would condemn Yaugandharayana much less for his doing these acts from such a motive than from the motive given in the folklore.

Again, the folklore story makes Gopalaka, the brother of Vasavadatta, also participate in these acts with the object of making Udayana the Emperor of the World. This involves a double absurdity; firstly, it makes him a party to the supersession of his own sister by another woman; and secondly, it makes him, described as an adept in politics by his father, agree to Udayana's becoming the Emperor of the World, after conquering his own father and kingdom. This absurdity has been obviated by the dramatist by omitting Gopalaka's name altogether from this plot.

In the folk-lore story, it is Vasantaka who is said to have been burnt along with Vasavadatta, and Yaugandharayana merely goes to Rajagriha with Vasantaka and Vasavadatta, and returns to Lavanaka, even before Udayana returns from the hunt, after entrusting Vasavadatta to Padmavati. This involves an absurdity. It is impossible that the king would return from his hunt only after Yaugandharayana returns from his expedition to Magadha. So, Bhasa has made Yaugandharayana the man who is said to have been burnt along with Vasavadatta, and has made Yaugandharayana rejoin the king only at the very end, when he claims Avantika back.

In the folk-lore story, the king suspected, from the behaviour of Yaugandharayana and Gopalaka, and also from remembering certain predictions of astrologers, that Queen Vasavadatta was really not dead, and lived in the hope of being re-united with her. This takes away much of the romantic force of the story, and Bhasa has omitted it, and put, in its stead, a half-formed suspicion of the king, that Vasavadatta was still alive, from seeing on Padmavati's face the unfading *tilak* mark. The folk-lore story would make Udayana's laments about Vasavadatta mere maudlin sentiment, and his marriage with Padmavati an act of the usual polygamist. The keen anguish and strong love, seen in Udayana's lament for Vasavadatta, would not have their effect, if the king is known to have really believed all the time that she was alive, and that he would be re-united with her. The fascinating dream scene in the Ocean Pavilion would also lose more than half its charm and force. The "Vision of Vasavadatta" would have become merely the " Sight of Vasavadatta."

The dream scene, the best thing in the "Vision of Vasavadatta," and the thing which has given the name to the play, is not in the folk-lore. Indeed, in the folk-lore, Yaugandharayana makes Vatsa Raja leave Rajagriha, as soon as the marriage is over, from fear that the king might discover Vasavadatta in the palace, and that the whole plot would be frustrated.

Many delicate touches in the Play, like Vasavadatta's making the bridal garland for Padmavati, her indignant exclamation "Oh, what an outrage ! Even my noble lord now belongs to another woman" are not found in the folk-lore story.

The folk-lore story, by making Padmavati fall in love with Vasavadatta at first sight, when she was taken to the palace grounds along with Vasantaka by Yaugandharayana, takes away the charming scene in the hermitage with its vivid description, and the beautiful episode of Padmavati's piety and desire to make gifts to holy men, and accepting Vasavadatta merely as a deposit at the request of a holy man. So, too, it takes away Padmavati's graciousness and genial hospitality, and kindly treatment of all around her, by stating that she suspected Vasavadatta to be an exalted personage, and gave her all the luxuries she wanted. Again, the folk-lore story makes Vasantaka live along with Vasavadatta, instead of Vasavadatta living alone in the Magadhan palace and moving freely with the maids and Padmavati.

In the folk-lore, Yaugandharayana makes the king of Magadha swear by the god of fire, at the time of Padmavati's marriage, never to injure Udayana, a most awkward and undra-

matic thing to do. Incidentally, that takes away also the spontaneity of the Magadhan King's help to Udayana, and would make his message and verse 12 of Act V lose much of their friendliness and grace.

In the drama, Vasavadatta follows Padmavati to her husband's home in Kausambi, and the events there lead naturally and convincingly to the revelation of Vasavadatta's true identity. In the folk-lore story, Vasavadatta separates from Padmavati, and goes, in the rear of the army, to Gopalaka's house in Lavanaka, and embraces Gopalaka and weeps, and Padmavati gets an inkling of this, and indignantly asks Vasavadatta her deposit, to return to her, and, then, Vatsaraja sees the unfading *tilak* mark on Padmavati's forehead, in her agitation, suspects Avantika to be Vasavadatta, rushes to Gopalaka's house, where he meets Vasavadatta and identifies her. There is much weeping, and the usual conventional offers of Vasavadatta and Padmavati to jump into the fire, and the conventional appeal of Yaugandharayana to the heavens to declare Vasavadatta to be pure and chaste, and the consequent declaration by the heavenly voice. All this third-rate imitation of famous stories, like those of Sita, Bhasa found to be highly undramatic encumbrances. So, he threw them overboard. It is obvious that, if he had followed the folk-lore story, Padmavati would have committed a breach of her promise to Yaugandharayana to keep Vasavadatta as a deposit always with her; Vasavadatta would have behaved in a manner unworthy of her essential nature; and the object of Yaugandharayana in entrusting Vasavadatta to Padmavati, making the latter bear witness to her virtue, could become a worthless addition, as offers to jump into the fire, and a heavenly voice, were required to convince Vatsaraja of Vasavadatta's chastity.

It is also added, somewhat naively, in the folk-lore story, that Vatsaraja, though never conquered any portion of the earth to except his own realm, felt as if he had conquered the whole world. Bhasa, who lived in the days of Emperor Chandragupta, ruling over a kingdom a hundred times the size of the Vatsa country, threw this naive illusion of world monarchy overboard. When he threw that motive for Yaugandharayana's act overboard, he had naturally to invent Aruni and his foul usurpation of the Vatsa country. Bhasa is also responsible for the touching scene in the palace gardens; the equally touching episode about the recovery of Ghoshavati and Vatsaraja's getting it mended and mourning over it; the arrival of the chamberlain and nurse from

Ujjaini at the critical moment with the paintings of the two lovers married in effigy, and other beautiful things.

PLAYS IN IMITATION OF THESE.

These two plays were so popular that many plays were written in imitation of them. Thus, the *Veena Vasavadatta* and the *Unmathavasavadatta* are imitations of *Pratijna Yaugandharayana*, and *Priyadarsika, Ratnavali*, and even *Malavikagnimitra*, are imitations of *Svapnavasavadatta*. In Ratnavali, the secret loves of Udayana and Sagarika, an attendant on queen Vasavadatta, are described. There is a conflagration, and, finally, Udayana marries Sagarika also. It is obvious that Sagarika represents Avantika in the Ocean Pavilion. In *Priyadarsika*, too, Udayana makes love to Aranyaka, a maid-servant of his queen, and his intrigues are discovered. Finally, the Queen herself presents Aranyaka, who is discovered to be the daughter of the king of Anga, to Udayana as a second wife. Needless to say, Aranyaka is a combination of Virachita and Avantika. In *Malavikagnimitra*, Agnimitra makes secret love to an attendant of his queen, called Malavika, who is kept jealously out of the king's sight on account of her great beauty. Finally, he marries Malavika, who turns out to be a Princess. The resemblance of Malavika to Avantika need not be emphasised. The very word Malava means also Avanti, the Avanti of Bhasa's days having become the Malava of Kalidasa's.

CHARACTERS IN THESE TWO PLAYS.

Udayana (*Vatsaraja*).

In Udayana, Bhasa has created a delightful character, combining in himself the roles of King Arthur, Don Juan and Prince Charming. No doubt, this character has been taken over from the folk-lore which, however, emphasises more the Don Juan aspect of the king, making him not only the darling of all women and an adept in the fine arts, but also a philanderer who forgets one fair woman the moment he sees another. The folk-lore had, even before Bhasa, made Udayana call Vasavadatta "Virachita", a secret flame of his, in a fit of absent-mindedness, and come to trouble, a theme which has been worn threadbare by many a Western novelist. Bhasa has emphasised the king's chivalrous and generous instincts more than his frivolous tendencies. In short, he has concentrated on the King Arthur and Prince Charming, and toned down the Don Juan element, though, of course,

the Virachita episode was too delicious to be dropped, and so, he hinted at it in the "Vision of Vasavadatta."

The picture presented by the king in these two plays is wholly delightful. He is not consciously polygamous, marrying another woman in cold blood when he has already one mate. Indeed, the poet emphasises that Vasavadatta had to be burnt to death before Udayana would consent to marry even the beautiful Padmavati, the daughter of the leading monarch of the age. In dealing with this subject, we have to remember the failings of those times. Sanskrit dramatists have always called kings "many-wived", and even Dushyanta, the hero of the Sakuntala, had many wives when he made love to, and married, Sakuntala. Indeed, Sage Kanva asks Sakuntala to be on good terms with her co-wives, a sentiment jarring on modern ears, and marring the beauty of the play. I may add that, in other countries, even worse conditions prevailed in those days. Solomon "the Wise" had hundreds of wives, let alone the concubines, though he ruled a country less in extent than Vatsa, and there is not a word in the Bible (Old Testament or New Testament) condemning his polygamous and other tendencies. Without any theoretical objection to polygamy, Bhasa, profound psychologist that he was, felt that something would be lacking in the romantic attachment of Udayana for Vasavadatta, if he married Padmavati while knowing Vasavadatta to be alive.

Udayana in Bhasa is primarily the romantic lover of Vasavadatta, though he is also the chivalrous and obliging husband of Padmavati. His poignant sorrow, on the supposed death of Vasavadatta, so vividly described by the student in Act I of the "Vision of Vasavadatta", and in the moving verses 1, 4, 4 (a), 5 and 6 in Act IV; 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 7 (a), 8, 8 (a), 9, 10, and 11 in Act V; and 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 13, 14 and 17 of Act VI of the same play, shows this. Verily, as the student says,

"Blessed is a woman loved with affection so sincere,
She lives in her lord's love for e'r though burnt and departed".

The description of Udayana as rolling on the ground in grief, rising up suddenly and calling out in agony "Oh Vasavadatta, oh daughter of Avanti's King, oh my heart's beloved, oh dearest pupil" will haunt us long after we have finished the play, and we too will say, with Udayana,

"Can one forget a love which shook the heart?
Fond memory brings it back with a start;

Our sad and mortgaged minds get free, one fears,
But by paying in full the debt of tears."

Such was his love for Vasavadatta that on her supposed death he neglected even his lute Ghoshavati which got abandoned on Narmada banks.

Udayana's famous comparison between Vasavadatta and Padmavati, in verse 4 of Act IV of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", is true for all time. There are some who hold the heart, for no obvious reason, and some who merely extort an intellectual appreciation. Verse 4 (a) in Act IV is exquisite, in its wonderful description of the ideal Hindu wife, who is flattered at the idea of being a servant to her husband, be she princess or peasant woman.

But, there is a peculiar chivalry and delicacy in Udayana with regard to Padmavati which would do him honour. Verse 8 in Act IV of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" shows this. His white lie, in verse 7, that the pollen of the *Kasa* flowers is responsible for his tears, had also its origin in consideration for Padmavati's feelings.

But, Udayana was not merely a ladies' man. He could fight, and fight like a Kshatriya warrior, the bravest of the brave. When caught in the trap of the artificial elephant, he did not try to back out, but rushed into the serried ranks of the enemy, and fought till he fell down exhausted. Even when fallen, such was the dread of his innumerable foes, for this one man, that they scattered away the moment he recovered consciousness. Verse 13 in Act V in "The Vision of Vasavadatta" too shows this. His going to catch the tusker attended only by a few infantrymen is also proof of his bravery. When the jester asks him not to go into the Ocean Pavilion because a cobra is there, the king, with a quiet smile, rushes to the spot, examines the object, finds it to be a wreath waving in the wind, and chaffs the jester about it. None but a brave man would rush so rapidly towards what might have been an Indian cobra, between which and death there is only a razor's edge.

The next quality in him is his passion for sportsmanship and hunting and adventure in general. It was his delight to go alone and capture wild tuskers of noted strength and prowess. It was not drugged tigers or tamed elephants, posing as wild, that he hunted and captured. He plunged into the densest forests of the Vindhyas to meet the wildest of elephants and lions, and insisted on going alone. This, of course, requires

a brave, strong, skilled man, with infinite resource and endurance, for there is no reason to believe that, in the Vindhyan jungles, delicious eatables and drinks were more common then than now.

He was very loving and considerate towards all, including his subordinates and servants, and generous in praise of them. Thus, the magnificient words he utters in verse 18, Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", regarding Yaugandharayana, must have compensated that individual for all his trouble. His compelling Padmavati to sit by his side, when receiving the messengers from Ujjaini, despite her reluctance, also shows this. His love for Vasavadatta need not be emphasised, as we have said enough about it. His love for King Mahasena and Queen Angaravati, seen in verses 6, 8 and 9 of Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" also shows this. When he hears of Rumanvan's knowing about the plot, he passes it off with a joke "What a rogue Rumanvan is!" The twenty men taken by him to tackle the false elephant perished to a man except Hamsaka. It is significant that he appealed to them not as an unimaginative captain does to his men, but as man to man, calling them by their names, family names etc.

He had a great regard for the law of the Aryas, and never broke them. Thus, he never looked at Avantika till she was proved to be Vasavadatta, despite his strong grounds for suspecting her to be so.

He was, like all Aryan Kings, a patron of the Vedas, the glorious heritage of India. He made Lavanaka a centre of Vedic learning, to which even students of other countries flocked, owing to the excellence of the training there. The reputation of a small state, Pudukotah, today for Sanskrit contests must prevent incredulity in this claim for Vatsa.

He was, like all really great men, a lover of the fine arts. Like Emperor Samudragupta, who loved to depict himself in his coins as playing on the Veena, Vatsaraja was an expert at playing on the Veena. Like Tansen, who could move wild animals with his songs, not to speak of Krishna moving the cows when he played on his flute, Vatsaraja could tame wild elephants with his lute. It will be rash to disbelieve such possibilities, and to believe only that death rays can kill, poison gas exterminate, and bombs smash. His fondness for his lute was only slightly less than his fondness for Vasavadatta. This is shown vividly by verses 1, 2 and 3 of Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta." The moment he saw the strings broken, he had the

lute sent to a master craftsman for repair. His lute meant as much to Vatsaraja, in his grief, as the piano meant to Beethoven in his deafness. Great artists love their instruments as much as great philosophers love their thoughts, and great soldiers love their victories.

Vatsaraja is a human being, not a doll or puppet, like so many princes. His talk with the jester is natural, that of one human being to another, and has none of that studio atmosphere, so common in the talks of princes. It is obvious that he is speaking his own words, and not another's put into his mouth. He has stories told him by his jester, and has often to correct the story-tellers' version about cities and kings.

He is a lover of flowers and natural beauty. He has a tenderness, like a true lover, for everything living. The extraordinarily tender verse 3 of Act IV, bubbling with feeling for lovers even among the bees, shows this. He sheds *real* tears when he thinks of Vasavadatta, not *stage* tears.

He is also well up in psychology. He analyses the nature of Vasavadatta and Padmavati well. He threatens the jester with force in order to make him say which of the two he prefers, but soon he realises that that method will not do, and begs of him to speak from mere friendship. His words about its being easy to find men of great virtue and courtesy in the world, but difficult to find those who appreciate such men, ring true for all time. His deduction in verse (2) (a) of Act IV, that Padmavati had only just left the stone seat in the *sephalika* bower, by the warmth on the seat, and his inference, in verse 4 of Act V, that Padmavati had never been to the Ocean Pavilion, owing to the bed being unruffled and the pillow not crushed, the quilt being undisturbed, the headache medicines not having left their stains, and nothing being placed to divert the patient's eye, and the improbability of a sick person's leaving the bed so soon, also show this.

He is a man who not only loves, but is loved in turn. His mother is anxious to get him back. Yaugandharayana, Rumanvan and the jester did acts of unthinkable heroism in order to rescue him from captivity. Vasavadatta, from love for him and his welfare, made the supreme sacrifice that woman can make, and allowed her lord to become another woman's husband. Padmavati, too, loved him, and freely forgave him his sentiments of preference for Vasavadatta. Even a casual person in the palace easily offered him the lute he had got. Mahasena, who

was at first fiercely inimical to him, soon had his enmity extinguished on hearing about his bravery and other qualities. The very jailor, Sivaka, allowed him to go outside the jail, a liberty not allowed by the rules, but exercised by jailors from those days till now.

"The whole world loves a lover", runs a Western proverb, and Udayana is an apt illustration of it. Despite his neglect of Governmental duties, excessive love of sport, and disregard of sound counsel, Udayana has remained a favourite with the Indians, and, will, I am sure, be a favourite with all. Such is the magic of his name that many plays have been written about him, besides these two, some instances being *Ratnavali, Priyadarsika, Vatsa Raja Charita and Unmatha Vasavadatta*. In distant Kerala, the most popular indigenous hero, the hero of a hundred ballads, is named Udayana after this King of Vatsa. Thacholi Thenan, with his warlike feats and amorous conquests, is only the Kerala edition of Udayana of Vatsa, with, of course, considerable modifications to suit the local conditions. None but a great character will be complimented like that.

PRADYOTA (MAHASENA).

Pradyota Mahasena is a king of a very different type from Udayana Vatsaraja. He is desirous of pomp and servility, and glories in the neighbouring kings putting the dust of his horses' hoofs on their coronets and heads, and in his orders being carried out like a forest fire burning everywhere, unlike the genial Udayana. While Udayana is never controlled even by the masterly Yaugandharayana, and has to be tricked into believing in the death of Vasavadatta before he would consent to marry Padmavati, Mahasena is afraid of his prime minister, Bharatarohaka, and probably married all his 16 queens from political motives, at the dictation of his ministers. In Act II of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", he expresses his opinion that Bharatarohaka does not like the kindly treatment of Udayana, and that he must win him over to his view, but, as often happens in such cases, Bharatarohaka wins over the king, and, in Act III we find Udayana once more in chains, a clear proof of Bharatarohaka's point of view prevailing over his master's. This can also be seen in his not allowing Avanti troops to go to the help of Udayana against Aruni who must have had the secret backing, or at least the sympathies, of Bharatarohaka.

There is no doubt, however, that Mahasena is at heart a good and kindly man, judged by the usual standards. He loves his wife; he adores his daughter; he wants to be fair to his enemies; he rushes to Angaravati and prevents her attempt at suicide, by telling her that there is nothing to be ashamed about, as Vasavadatta had been married to Udayana by the Kshatriya system of *Gandharva* marriage. Even the burning of large portions of his city by Yaugandharayana does not stand in his way of performing the marriage of Vasavadatta and Udayana in effigy, and accepting the *fait accompli.* He has got a high sense of honour. There is no doubt that between Act III and Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows," when Nalagiri was made, by the machinations of Yaugandharayana, to run amok, he released Udayana from his bondage to bring that elephant under control with his lute, Ghoshavati, and thereafter made him also Vasavadatta's tutor in music, as is clear from Queen Angaravati's message sent through the chamberlain and nurse at the end of "The Vision of Vasavadatta." He did not send Udayana once more to prison after this act of service, as many a lesser man might have done. His anxiety to get Udayana treated for his wounds and to restore him to health does him credit. He is fair to his foes. In describing the line of Bharata Kings, his foes, he does not deduct even a tittle from their glorious reputation. His sentiments regarding the selection of a suitable bridegroom are excellent. His further reflection that, even after such careful selection, the fate of each marriage depends largely on Fate is also profoundly true.

He is a man of considerable shrewdness. He would not allow Angaravati to get away by merely stating that the girl should be given where there would be no reason to rue about the choice later on. His remark that Hindu mothers feel small when their grown-up daughters are not given away in marriage, and yet grieve greatly when their marriage and the inevitable separation come, also shows this.

He is the type of the usual run of Indian monarchs, unlike Udayana who represents the ones far above the average. For him, significantly enough, the lute, Ghoshavati, presents no problems of re-stringing or playing, or represent any emotional association, but presents simply a problem of gifting it away to a suitable person. He has his own share of psychological intuition. He labels his first son as an adept in politics, and not interested in music; his second son as an expert in athletics, but a

foe of aesthetics; he gives the lute to his daughter, Vasavadatta, and, in reply to her mother's statement, that the girl would simply get mad over it and play for hours, says, like many an Indian father "Let her play on, play on! It will not be so easy in her father-in-law's house." In Udayana, we see only a lover, and not a father; in Mahasena, we see the father emphasised. His relations, even towards Angaravati, were not those of a lover, but of a husband and head of the family, she being second in command.

VASAVADATTA.

Vasavadatta is a memorable character. Her supreme trait is her complete identification with her husband, and readiness to sacrifice her all for him. That is expressed in verse 4 (*a*) of Act IV of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", and represents the ideal Hindu wife, from Sita's days to these. It will be somewhat difficult for Westerners to understand this aspect of her character. Often, what passes for strength in one civilisation is taken for weakness in another. An advocate of non-violence will be honoured in India and despised in Germany. A man fond of wine in moderation will be called a 'good mixer' in Western countries, but, will be roundly labelled a 'drunkard' in this country. A woman refusing to allow her husband to marry another, for saving a country or even the world, may be considered heroic in Western countries, whereas a woman making this supreme sacrifice may be considered heroic in India. But, largely due to the Great War of 1914-1918, and the present Great War, the world is becoming more and more one unit, and I dare say there will be many now in every country who will understand and appreciate both the above apparently contradictory objects of fame, and see heroism in both the women. It has been the pride of the Hindu race that just as oxygen and hydrogen, two gases, when mixed, become life-giving water, and do not separate thereafter, except by the machinations of men, so, too, a girl who has been in her father's family till the age of 12, is married to a stranger, on whom she has not set her eyes before, and identifies her lot with his to such an extent that father, mother, brother, sister become but mere names of an ancient and almost forgotten past, and her husband becomes her god, her all. It is only those who have lived under this system and derived its full benefit that can appreciate this marvellous thing. As a Hindu husband who has shared in the benefits of the system, I, for one, would certainly

say that, whatever the defects of the system abstractly, the complete identification of the wife with the husband is a sublime thing, a debt which the husband can never hope to repay, like the pure benefits of nature, like air or water. So, I am sure that among India's millions, Vasavadatta will be loved as an ideal Hindu wife, even as Udayana paid her the eloquent tribute referred to above.

But, despite this, Vasavadatta is not an automaton, and exhibits her human feelings, as when she exclaims "Oh, what an outrage! Even my husband has become another's", and carefully avoids putting the leaf "rival-crusher" in the wedding garland, while liberally using the "widowhood-preventer". She is agitated when she hears that Udayana is betrothed to Padmavati, and is calmed only when she learns from Padmavati's nurse that he has not come to Rajagriha for this purpose, but has only been made to agree to it when he is there on another errand. Even then, she feels sad at times, though the sacrifice was agreed to by her. Thus, when, in the famous dream scene, the king asks her whether she is angry, she replies "No, no. Only sad and unhappy". She cannot be blamed for this. Even Christ, who had agreed with God to sacrifice himself for mankind, cried out, when actually crucified, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me in this exigent?". Even God born as a man will have such a substratum of unhappiness. What then of Vasavadatta in the prime of her womanhood, separated from her darling husband, though with her own consent? Her scornful expression "Shame, even here Virachita!", when Udayana asked her whether she was thinking of Virachita, shows her essentially feminine nature. She is indignant at being asked in the hermitage to move out of the way, and asks Yaugandharayana whether even *she* might be ordered to make way.

She is very intelligent, as when she gives ingenious explanations to cover up her remarks which had almost given herself away. Thus, in Act II of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", she says inadvertently that Udayana is handsome, and, when Padmavati asks her how she knew that, she gives the clever reply that the people of Ujjaini were remarking so, and Padmavati is satisfied, as she considered it natural for the people of Ujjaini to have seen him and remarked thus about one of his outstanding traits. Again, when she heard about the betrothal of Udayana to Padmavati, she exclaimed involuntarily "What an improper thing!" and when asked what she meant, said that she was thinking of how deeply the king was said to have grieved for

Vasavadatta, and how soon he had forgotten all that. So, too, she involuntarily blurted out in the *sephalika* bower that Vasavadatta loved Udayana even more than Padmavati did, and, when asked by Padmavati, said that had her love been less, she would not have forsaken her people to elope with an enemy of her father.

She is very considerate to others. Thus, when Padmavati offers, for her sake, to go away from the *sephalika* garden, even though her husband is in tears, a few yards from her, she offers to back alone herself, and sends Padmavati to console her husband. So, too, she is very anxious not to upset the plan of Yaugandharayana, though she is the person made to suffer by it. She does not allow Padmavati to take any blame on herself for treating her as an attendant on her, and says to her "Rise up, rise up, oh gracious woman! If anything offends, it is your prostrating to me unnecessarily, for nothing at all". Her moving with the maids was that of the natural familiarity of a high-born lady with common people, not fearing in the least, like upstarts, that such a thing would bring her down in the esteem of the maids.

She has got another trait which will endear her to many people. She is fond of making sweets, and giving them in plenty to those who want them. That is why Vasantaka prefers her to Padmavati. It is obvious that one of the main activities of women is in the kitchen, and Vasavadatta excels in this quality also.

PADMAVATI.

Padmavati is quite different from Vasavadatta, though equally lovable. She loves her husband, but is not above seeing his failings. Thus, she remarks "Now, my noble lord is playing Vasantaka's part", in other words, that he is playing the fool. She is a gracious woman, fond of vigorous exercise, like the ball game, whereas Vasavadatta is fonder of the lute than of the ball. Padmavati is much simpler and less subtle, as Vasavadatta's explanations of her three inadvertent expressions easily satisfied her. Hers was an unsuspecting, generous mind, spacious in its scope, limpid in its flow, and pure from top to bottom. She bore malice to none. She wanted none to suffer for her sake. Seeing all the fuss made about her headache, she did not even go to the room arranged for her, probably from the same feeling of contempt for fussing that an English sportswoman, say a

Mrs. Mollison, would have experienced. Her treatment of the maids and Avantika was exemplary, tender, kind, considerate and free. She allowed such liberty to those under her that her maid could say, in her presence, that Udayana lacked all courtesy, by preferring his dead wife, Vasavadatta, to Padmavati. But, she corrected her, all the same, and said that Udayana, far from lacking courtesy, had shown great courtesy, by remembering the merits of Vasavadatta even after her death. This extorted from Vasavadatta the compliment "My dear, your words are worthy of your exalted birth."

Padmavati has a good stock of humour, like all healthy persons. Thus, instead of getting angry with the jester for his giving out the same silly excuse about the pollen of the *kasa* flowers falling into the eyes, which Vasavadatta had given out already and the king was going to give later on, she remarks indulgently "The chivalrous master has a chivalrous servant". She does not tell the king anything, even after hearing this stale excuse trotted out by him, for the third time. This graciousness of mind is something which all humanity will appreciate.

So, too, her delicacy at sitting with Udayana, in the place of Vasavadatta, when the messengers from Ujjaini wanted to see him, does her honour and credit.

She is equally intelligent, though less subtle than Vasavadatta. The way in which she decided whether Lady Avantika was Vasavadatta by calling for Udayana's portrait, and comparing him with the likeness, will show this. So, too, she was not taken in by the silly excuse about the pollen of the *kasa* flowers being the cause of Udayana's tears. Nor was she surprised at Udayana's preferring Vasavadatta to her, as she must have guessed that even before.

She is pious, and lavish in her gifts. That exquisite scene in the hermitage when the chamberlain, at her behest, asks the hermits what gifts they want; her desire to see the portraits of her husband and Vasavadatta and do honour to them; her spending a day at the hermitage, all show this. She is, by no means, a lover of authority or superiority. At her instance, the chamberlain asks the hermits to go and fetch their water, faggots, flowers, grass, etc., freely as if she were not there, as she was an upholder of the law, like the rest of her family. When we contrast this magnanimous behaviour with the many restrictions put by even petty officials, when camping in a place, her greatness will become evident.

ANGARAVATI.

We get only glimpses of Queen Angaravati, but they are delightful. She is fond of Vasavadatta, and very anxious, like all Indian mothers, to get her married suitably, and, yet, grieves at the very thought of separation consequent on such marriage. She wants the best bridegroom for her daughter, and, the moment she hears about the qualifications of Udayana, makes up her mind that he shall be her son-in-law, and makes her opinion prevail in the end, however unlikely its chances appeared at the outset. She backs out rapidly from the discussion the moment Vatsaraja's arrival is announced, and tells Mahasena that her daughter is too small for him to worry about her marriage just then. Mahasena gets an inkling, but only an inkling, of her ideas, and he asks her to remember that Vatsaraja is their foe. The Queen has a keen sense of honour. On hearing that Udayana has eloped with Vasavadatta, and not knowing that he has married her, she wants to commit suicide, and has to be saved from it by Mahasena, who assures her about Udayana's having married Vasavadatta, having known it himself from some messenger carrying Yaugandharayana's reply to Bharatarohaka, that no Bharata King will look at a maiden's face or teach her without first marrying her, or guessing it himself from his knowledge of the ways of the Bharatas.

Angaravati's message to Udayana, sent through the chamberlain and nurse, is touching, affectionate, and graceful. It may be noted, in this connection, that the wife's mother is as popular in India as she is unpopular in England, just as a husband's mother is as unpopular in India as she is popular in England. So, Angaravati, Udayana's wife's mother, is shown as a kindly, affable and lovable thing. She must have been pretty able, to have become the head of sixteen Queens, and, virtually, the presiding deity over Ujjaini.

YAUGANDHARAYANA.

Yaugandharayana's character, as depicted in these two plays, is a grand one. An outstanding trait is his sacrificing everything for the sake of political ends, in this case, however, the independence and liberty of his king and country, and not the ignoble desire to bring other countries under his master's yoke, as in the folk-lore. Thus, for the sake of saving Vatsa from the usurper, he mercilessly sacrifices the happiness, for a time, of Udayana and Vasavadatta. But, it must be remembered that

he does not spare himself also. If he is quite content to make Udayana a polygamist, he is himself willing to become a madman. His pride in his country is as great as that of Bismarck in Germany, or Chatham in England.

He is not an unlearned demagogue or a chance favourite getting into high power. He is a hereditary minister's son, and has read all the books on politics available in his time. He scoffs at Bharatarohaka for the failure of his half-baked tricks with elephants, etc., and takes legitimate pride in his own successful counter-trick. He openly boasts about the victory won by his intellect and long training. The ingenuity with which he devises the plan for the release of his king, the swiftness with which he revises that plan, and converts it into a plan for releasing the king from the prison and Vasavadatta from the inner apartments of the palace, the masterly way in which he fills Ujjaini with his spies, and makes that town another Kausambi, except for the walls and the flags, his ingenious devices for making elephants run amok, his capacity to win over Mahaṣena's men to his side, his keeping himself well informed of current events through his spies,—all these show his mastery of the politics of those days.

But, he is not a mere politician. Like all the greatest politicians of the world, he is also a soldier. His is not the kind of decadent politics dependent on mere intrigue. He can fight, and fight well too. Single-handed, he fought the troops of Mahasena, and kept them at bay till his master had time to escape with Vasavadatta. Even though his sword was broken in twain by an elephant's tusk, he continued to fight. He was brave, and did not at all supplicate for mercy when caught. Fearlessly, he told Bharatarohaka, when asked what the political science advised about a foe vanquished in battle, " death ".

He had a high sense of duty for himself and for others. When he was caught napping, and his king was taken prisoner, he described the king's message to him as an expression of his opinion that he had done nothing in return for the food, honour and dignity he had received. He said that the women, by their wailing for Vatsaraja's fate, were also making the incompetence and worthlessness of the ministers patent. He took dreadful oaths to release the king, and, with single-pointed energy, concentrated on the task and achieved it. When he had achieved it, he said that he was victorious, happy and calm, and that he had finished with enmity, fear and dishonour, and felt as happy as Aswathama felt when he slew the slayer of his father. He

compared his joy to that of the sages who go to the forest, of those who die after accomplishing their tasks, and of those who die without a single thing to repent for. He asked the Ujjain soldiers to allow the people who wanted to see him to do so, so that they might see how ministers should suffer for their king and country, and either resolve to do so, or drop all ideas of becoming ministers. So, the desire for personal power and wealth was, according to him, the most reprehensible thing in a minister, and, we, in these days of democracy, had better emphasise that.

This sense of duty made him as hard a critic of others as of himself. He wanted to know what Rumanvan was doing when the king offered to go alone to tackle the artificial elephant. He asked Hamsaka why he had left the king, instead of following him. He did not spare even the king when he deviated from this high standard. In withering words of irony, he queries whether he saw no shame in making love when chains were clanking.

But, he would not, for that reason, leave the king to his fate, as suggested by Vasantaka. He asked him how a man, who depended on them, his friends, and did not know good times from bad, whose eyes love and worry had dimmed, could be abandoned. With all his bravery and sense of duty, he had also his inner misgivings as to how his king, for whom he was sacrificing himself, would view it all, as is shown by verse No. 15 in Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta."

He had a great pride in the Bharata race, the premier royal family of India. Verse 17 in Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows" and verse 16 in Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" show this beautifully. No Indian can help being touched by the remarkable beauty of these simple sentiments, and, be it noted, the principal thing attributed to those ideal monarchs was the utter freedom from lust for other people's women, a thing shown by Kalidasa also to be a dominant trait of Dushyanta. The description of Udayana's ancestors, the Bharata Kings, by Mahasena, as those who loved and were loved by the Vedas, and who were the beloved of their subjects, shows that Yaugandharayana is not making any false claim on behalf of his kings.

Like all leaders of men, Yaugandharayana was considerate to his men, and could command great devotion from them. Thus, Salaka, a mere messenger, told him that though the way was long, his love for him would make him go further. Rumanvan and Vasantaka put on the disguises of a monk and beggar for his sake. Vasavadatta was so convinced that he was working for Uda-

yana's welfare that she consented to his horrible plan willingly. All this shows the magnetic influence he had over his subordinates and servants. But, just as genius is 99 per cent. perspiration and one per cent. inspiration, magnetic influence, too, is only 99 per cent. consideration and one per cent. inexplicable attraction. Yaugandharayana asks Salaka to rest awhile, requests Hamsaka to sit down, finds an excuse for Hamsaka's naming him against ceremonial etiquette, is very considerate to the Queen-Mother and her feelings as a mother, and gives Vijaya excellent instructions for gently breaking the news.

He has also a high sense of friendship, as verse 3 in Act I and verse 7 in Act III of "Yaugandharayana's Vows" will show. The Queen-Mother, too, in her message to him, said that he was a friend before he was a minister, and, so, was another son to her, and should restore her son to her. These things emphasise the beliefs of those times that friendship was a bond stronger than that of relationship and that sons' friends were like sons.

For all his being the prime minister of the king, and a stickler for his king's honour, prestige and authority, he had a righteous indignation against unnecessary exercise of authority, as is shown by his condemnation of the Magadha king's servants, when they asked people in the hermitage to move aside (verse 3 of Act I of "The Vision of Vasavadatta"). In telling language, he said that those who were asking people to move from the path were themselves moving away from the path of righteousness.

He was entirely without a selfish desire for advancement or aggrandisement or prosperity. Verse 9 of Act I in "The Vision of Vasavadatta" correctly expresses his attitude. He was, of course, capable of sudden anger, like all strong men. Bharatarohaka described him as an angry snake insulted and put in basket. His anger at Mahasena's trick in capturing Udayana is shown by his setting fire to several houses in Ujjain.

But, he had many noble impulses. He was very sensitive regarding kindness. He expresses that death would have been better than the offer of a golden chalice to him who had set fire to many houses belonging to those who offered it to him, and when the fires were still burning (verse 22 in Act IV of "*Yaugandharayana's Vows*"). This is reminiscent of that very curious play "*A woman killed by kindness*." He is also generous, as is seen from his warm tribute to Rumanvan on hearing about his frank words of advice to Udayana in the Elephant

Forest, and his wishing that he could be as free as Rumanvan. This is also seen from his even more generous praise of Rumanvan in Act I, verse 15, of "The vision of Vasavadatta", and this, in spite of the fact that Rumanvan was still in the Court as minister, whereas he himself was wandering about in a hermit's disguise.

He was essentially an optimist, and a believer in human effort, though, like all wise men, he recognized that sometimes Fate would prevail over the best efforts and nullify them. The famous verse 18 in Act I of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", and his efforts to release Udayana show his optimism and belief in human effort. But, verse 3 of Act I and his remark to Hamsaka that Fate is stronger, show the other side of the shield. Indeed, Yaugandharayana seems to have read the two stories in the Panchatantra, one (The Weaver Who Fought Against Fate) showing human effort prevailing over Fate, and the other (The Votary Of Fate) showing Fate's power.[21] He had no great belief in things superstitious, though he did not avoid any prevalent custom, simply on the ground that it might also be somewhat superstitious. Thus, he is quite willing to have the auspicious cord made and blessed by the married ladies for sending it to Vatsaraja to ensure his safety from enemies, demons, tricks, etc., but, like a modern, requests the Queen-Mother to send it at once, even if it were to be made and blessed by only one married woman, and he alludes to its uselessness when it arrived after the fatal news.

In the matter of astrology, he seems to have been more credulous. He made all his plans about Vatsaraja's marriage with Padmavati basing them on the prediction of Pushpaka, Bhadraka and other eminent astrologers that Padmavati was sure to become the consort of Vatsaraja. Of course, in defence of this, we can say that that particular prediction proved to be right; and, so, Yaugandharayana was not proved to be wrong, as he believed only in it, and did not believe in any prediction which went wrong. Shakespeare, in his Julius Caesar, seems to blame Caesar for not acting on the astrologer's prediction about the Ides of March.

He was an adept at disguises. The great prime minister of Vatsa could run about in the streets of Ujjain as a contemptible madman, carrying sweets with him, and, bawling out "sweets,

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[21] *See my* "Panchatantra and Hitopadesa Stories", stories Nos. 22 and 21.

sweets." He could disguise himself effectively as a hermit, and even Udayana would not recognize him at first. He had not become, fossilized, like lesser men, by his job, but could be different things to different men, a sign of intellectual dynamism.

His intelligence was sharp as a razor, though also heavy as a hammer. His quick and ready retorts to Bharatarohaka, repelling every attack; his witty and sarcastic remarks about Mahasena's army and the carelessness of Mahasena's ministers who took such good care of the casket after the jewel was gone, and envisaged the problem of lopping the branches after the trunk had been cut, all show this. Peshwa Baji Rao, I, the great prime minister of Sahu Chatrapati, when he said "Cut the trunk; the branches will fall off by themselves" was only echoing Yaugandharayana's words. When Yaugandharayana was told that Vatsaraja had been captured, he was not taken in, and replied, with convincing arguments, as to why the report could not be true. So, too, he was not taken in by Udayana's specious excuse that, in desiring to take away Vasavadatta, he was only anxious to be more fully revenged on Mahasena for the trick played on him.

He had a philosopher's proper estimate of things earthly, as his words in verse 4 of Act I in "The Vision of Vasavadatta" will show.

He had a commanding appearance, an iron will and a booming and distinctive voice. Few people dared to oppose him. The jester, the boldest of the lot, suggested to him the abandoning of Vatsaraja to his fate, but got a crushing answer, and kept quiet. Rumanvan did not dare even to suggest any such thing. There are certain strong personalities in the world who can crush opposition like a steamroller, whether, they call themselves monarchs, aristocrats, democrats or even communists, and Yaugandharayana was, undoubtedly, one of them.

He had an inborn capacity to organise, as is shown by his organising Vatasaraja's release from Ujjaini, the fire at Lavanaka, the entrustment of Vasavadatta to Padmavati, etc. Of course. he had the necessary psychological insight. Thus, he knew that Vasavadatta would be well treated by Padmavati; that Padmavati would not go back upon her word once given, and that the king of Magadha would offer Padmavati to Vatsaraja, the moment he became a widower, and would offer his help for regaining his kingdom. This psychological insight is also seen in his advice to Vijaya how to break the sad news to

the Queen-Mother, and his correct analysis of the weakness of Mahasena's army in verse 4 of Act I of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", and in many other passages. His remarks that even deities, when unrecognised, are insulted by the world, show his profound insight into human nature and conduct.

He was an impetuous man, like all men of deep emotion and heroic actions. When he heard from Hamsaka about Vatsaraja's calamity, he thought of putting an end to his own life. His taking oaths also shows his impetuous nature.

He was fully conscious of his own defects, as is shown by his self-condemnation to Hamsaka, and from verse 22 in Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", and other passages.

He had his own share of the very human desire for praise and popularity. He asks the soldiers of Ujjaini to allow him to be seen by the citizens after his heroic deeds, so that they might not remember him merely as the contemptible madman who had been wandering about the streets. He was very highly pleased by the Queen-Mother's referring to him as a son, and by Udayana's sending him a special message, instead of to the Council of Ministers. The very fact that, before taking his first vow, he asks Vijaya as to what the Queen-Mother said, and Hamsaka as to what Udayana said, shows this. His love for Udayana is shown by the pathetic words of grief he utters in verse 11 in Act I of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", on hearing about his capture, and by his initial inability to tell Vijaya about the capture, and the characteristic monosyllables which convey no meaning to her, but were uttered by him owing to excess of emotion. But, he was no courtier or flatterer or toady. His sentiments about the king's inopportune love affairs, while in jail, expressed to Rumanvan and the jester, are enough proof of it. No wonder, Rumanvan was the person who attended on the king constantly, and not this explosive and frank premier.

In Yaugandharayana, Bhasa has portrayed a great minister and a great man, indeed, one comparable to Chanakya, Chandragupta's minister, whom the dramatist seems to have had in mind.

RUMANVAN.

Rumanvan is a very devoted minister, and efficient in his own way. He has none of the commanding personality or intelligence of Yaugandharayana, but, is, by no means, devoid of talents, as his telling Yaugandharayana that night is worse for unsuccessful people than day, though, abstractly, day and night

are the same, shows, as also his suggesting to Yaugandharayana to revise his plan and convert it into one for rescuing the king from the prison and Vasavadatta from the inner apartments, instead of wasting his time in criticising the king's inopportune love-making. His devotion to the king is beautifully brought out by verses 14 and 15 of Act I of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" uttered by the student of theology, as well as by Yaugandharayana himself. He is the person chosen to attend on the king in his days of anguish after learning about Vasavadatta's death by fire. No one else could have filled that place so well, neither Yaugandharayana nor the jester. Needless to say, Rumanvan must have been a very deep fellow, as he managed to attend on the king assiduously without even giving him a hint that he knew that Vasavadatta's death was a myth. Even in the folk-lore story, it is significant that it is by looking at Yaugandharayana and Gopalaka that Udayana suspected Vasavadatta to be alive, and not by looking at Rumanvan. It is a fact that often second-rate men, like Rumanvan, have got the tremendous capacity to retain secrets, considered to be an outstanding quality of the Civil Service in England and other advanced countries.

But, in spite of such secrecy and apparent duping, his devotion and unselfishness are so taken for granted that Udayana, on learning from Yaugandharayana that Rumanvan also knew about the plot, simply exclaimed, good-humouredly, "What a rogue Rumanvan is !"

VASANTAKA.

The jester, Vasantaka, is one of those glorious jesters, whom Indian literature abounds in. He is quite different from the Jester, Santhushta, in *Avimaraka,* and the jester, Maitreya, in *Charudatta.* He is, like all Bhasa's jesters, not a mere buffoon or fool, but is 'a jolly good fellow'. Like all jesters, he loves the good things of life, and has no sympathy with sackcloth and ashes, or rolling on the ground in agony for things which cannot be remedied. He is very glad when his grieving and wandering and god-forsaken master is once more in velvet, at the Magadhan Court, with mosaic rooms to bathe in, delicious dishes to eat, etc. His preference for Vasavadatta over Padmavati is solely based on that lady's giving him endless sweetmeats to eat, be it remembered, not at all a bad test to judge people by, seeing that the whole world revolves on the belly, not only with the jester, but with all the rest of us.

But, the jester is no mere glutton with no other qualifications. He can put on effective disguises, as when he disguises himself as a beggar in Act III of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", and utters delicious nonsense about sweets and Siva's being a thief. His remarks incidentally show his knowledge regarding mythology, and about colours and paintings.

He has an insatiable curiosity, as when he wants Udayana, who is newly wedded to Padmavati, to tell him whether he loved Vasavadatta or Padmavati more, and keeps on pressing him to answer, despite his obvious reluctance, not taking mere hints showing which way his inclination lay, but wanting plain answers, to the disgust of Padmavati. He is also quite a good intermediary and liaison officer, never allowing the chain of communication between Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan on the one hand and Udayana on the other to break. He has the usual Brahman's grouse (from those times to these) that the days of the Brahmans are over. Of course, he is a Brahman, as all jesters have to be in Sanskrit dramas, for the simple reason that none but a man belonging to the superior castes, and thoroughly non-violent, and, so, not at all dangerous as a possible competitor, can be allowed to be so familiar with the king.

He is not a toady or mere flatterer, and is fully capable of moving on equal terms with the king, a rare quality in any age. He is not a poltroon. In his dealings with the king, he defies him to use force on him if he could, and makes the king abandon that mode of approach and take to entreaty. He knows to move freely with servants and make them honour, respect and love him, another rare quality. The way in which the maid-servants speak to him is evidence of this. He has fits of disgust and anger, too, as, when he asks Yaugandharayana to leave Vatsaraja to his fate.

He has a delicious sense of humour. When Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan tell him that they do not understand what he says, he replies, in unforgettable words, "*I* understand my thoughts first, and *you* next." So, too, when Yaugandharayana says that it would be praiseworthy to go on spending the rest of their days in Ujjaini, even though Vatsaraja would not be rescued, he replies, humorously, that it would be praiseworthy if the world understood why they were doing so. When he is further told by the indignant Yaugandharayana that the servants of the King of Vatsa were not doing anything to please the world, but only to please their master, pat came the reply that the master too would not realise their sacrifices. Vasantaka, in short, is a person,

who need not fear comparison with the jester in King Lear, or any other jester in the dramas of the world.

BHARATAROHAKA.

Bharatarohaka is depicted as a minister priding in his knowledge of politics, but found wanting when weighed in the scales. He has got great influence over Mahasena, and was responsible for the trick which captured Udayana. But, as Yaugandharayana remarks justly, the elephant trick did more injury than good to Ujjaini, as Vatsaraja went away taking Vasavadatta and burning half the houses in Ujjaini, by cleverly reversing the trick on the head of the surprised Bharatarohaka. Like third-rate people, Bharatarohaka saw only the consequences *he* intended, and not all the natural consequences of his acts. Even in his verbal duel with Yaugandharayana, he was uniformly defeated. Of course, he had sense enough to recognise his inferiority to that great minister. In fact, he met him half-hesitatingly, and expecting all that he got. He had also the saving commonsense of knowing when he was beaten. He ordered Yaugandharayana's chains to be taken off, and reversed his policy of hostility to Vatsaraja, and, in the end, agreed to Mahasena's policy, and must have taken part in the marriage, in effigy, of Vatsaraja and Vasavadatta, though with mental reservations. He must have, needless to say, rejoiced at Aruni's usurpation and made Mahasena withhold help from Udayana.

THE CHAMBERLAINS.

The chamberlains of Ujjaini and Magadha, shown in these plays, are a lovable, dignified and learned lot. Of course, custom required that they should be aged Brahmins of learning, loyalty, character, commonsense, calmness, truth and knowledge of hospitality and etiquette. Badarayana, Mahasena's chamberlain, is shown as having a great pride in his master and kingdom, and taking a vivid interest in his master's affairs, like the princess's marriage. He knows how to entertain guests, according to their gradations, inevitable with kings. He is a stickler for etiquette, and prostrates to Mahasena when, in his excitement at the capture of Vatsaraja, he did not communicate the news with the usual prefix "Victory to Mahasena." We may be certain that nothing that even Mahasena could do would have prevented Badarayana from prostrating at this gross breach of etiquette. With solemn pride, he offers to Mahasena the *veena* Ghoshavati. He

describes Vatsaraja's condition with skill, and runs errands, despite his old age, efficiently and promptly. He announces his arrival at Kausambi with pardonable vanity and pomp. He asks Udayana to sit down and hear Mahasena's message, though he, undoubtedly, rejoices at Udayana's standing up initially to hear that message, and praises him for doing so, as an act worthy of the son of Vaidehi. He has got a lot of worldly wisdom in him, as, when he remarks about Mahasena's not accepting or rejecting any of the suitors, probably because the man destined to wed Vasavadatta had not sent his message, and when, in verse 10 of Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", he asks, with the mellowed wisdom of old age, "Who can arrest the hand of death, when the victim's hour has come? Who can save the pitcher when the ropes break asunder ? who can prevent the perishing and springing of trees and men in their due seasons ?" Verse 24 of Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows" brings to mind Shelley's famous line "Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught."

The chamberlain of Magadha belongs to the same general category, though there are some individual differences. Like Badarayana, he has also a pride in his king and princess, and proclaims that they would never break the law. He asks the hermits to go and follow their avocations, and fetch grass, firewood and water, as the stay of Padmavati in their midst would not make the slightest difference. But, unlike Badarayana, he exhibits an intolerance of the exercise of harsh authority, the result of his serving a less pompous and authoritarian king. He asks the guards not to push people out of the way in the hermitage and bring their king to shame. He invites the hesitant student of theology to walk freely into the hermitage, as that place is common to all. He wants the student to accept his hospitality, as he had gone there before. It is difficult to imagine Badarayana inviting a student to share his hospitality, though he is in his proper place in entertaining the Hon'ble Jaivanti. To Badarayana, nature exists only to glorify Mahasena, whereas the chamberlain of Magadha shows an instinctive love of nature in verse 16 of Act I of "The Vision of Vasavadatta." The chamberlain of Magadha has his stock of wisdom no whit inferior to Badarayana's. Thus, he remarks that it is easier to part with wealth or life or hoarded merit, but very difficult to guard over a young woman deserted by her husband, night and day. He has got a picturesque and effective way of putting things, as is clear from verse 8 of Act I. He expresses a desire that he might

meet Yaugandharayana, disguised as a wandering hermit, again, a thing which Badarayana would not have done, unless, of course, he knew the hermit to be Yaugandharayana, in which case he could utter graceful sentiments as in verse 21 of Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows."

The Magadhan chamberlain can deliver his master's message with dignity and skill, as is shown in verse 12 of Act V of "The Vision of Vasavadatta." On the whole, these chamberlains of Bhasa impress one in the same way as the high-class butlers of Wodehouse do, resembling one another and differing from one another just as those dignitaries do.

MINOR CHARACTERS.

Even the minor characters in these plays have got an individuality and charm. Thus, the student of theology flits in and flits out, like a sparrow, entering through one door and going out by another. But, Bhasa makes him narrate vividly the love of Udayana for Vasavadatta, the rolling of the king on the ground with the charred ornaments of the Queen, and the devoted attendance of Rumanvan on the king. Not content with that, he makes the student describe a hermitage in loving and feeling words (verse 12 of Act I of "The Vision of Vasavadatta"). The celibate's shyness and avoidance of women are shown by the expressive words "Oh, but the women-folk !" The student, like all ancient students of India, has no desire to linger longer than necessary even for the sake of the company of such a dignitary like the chamberlain of Magadha, and, of course, does not think of looking at the two most beautiful women of the age, Vasavadatta and Padmavati, except to remark that these women presented a hindrance to his entering the hermitage. The way in which Udayana's episode affected him was, characteristically, that he had to break off his *Vedic* studies. His expressive sentiment that the dead Queen was living in Udayana's love, and his description of Lavanaka being a wilderness after the departure of Vatsaraja, show him to be quite a keen observer of human nature.

Gatrasevaka too has got an individuality. His amusing story of his pledging Bhadravati's goad, necklet, garland, bell and whip in succession, culminating with the confession that he had pledged the elephant itself, his nonsensical gibberish, and effective drunken pose, reinforced with a powerful drunkard's song, and the sudden change of attitude when he hears of the escape of Vatsaraja with Vasavadatta, and retorts to the loyal guard of

Mahasena that he was not a drunkard but a spy of Yaugandharayana, and that he would call his friends who would, like king cobras, come to the place, and his spirited war songs (verses 2, 3 and 4 of Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows"), all show him to be a consummate spy and soldier, a combination which has become famous after the late World War and this World War.

Hamsaka, too, has got his own individuality. He is a devoted servant of Vatsaraja, and has so vividly narrated the story in the Elephant Forest that we feel as if we are witnessing the events with him. He is not subservient or servile, and bluntly tells Yaugandharayana, in reply to his self-condemnation, that the message must have been sent to him owing to his not having sufficiently deserved the food, kindness and dignity received from his master, "Very likely". He asks Yaugandharayana, when he guesses about the infantryman's information to Vatsaraja, whether he had fallen into the trap open-eyed. It is the loss of such freedom in subordinates that is largely responsible for the downfall of India.

Even the conventional female-door-keeper, Vijaya, has been given some individuality. When she learns the sorrowful news of Vatsaraja's capture, and is asked to tell the Queen-mother about it, she says "I shall go and tell her, unhappy me !", thus putting in a human touch, instead of behaving like an automaton. So, too, when Yaugandharayana, in the depth of his sorrow, is unable to speak out, and says "It is thus", she tells him "Tell me, sir, tell me". This shows that she, too, was moving freely with the great minister, and was not simply a mechanical portress.

The maids of Padmavati in "The Vision of Vasavadatta" have also their individuality. They are lively, good-humoured, and fond of poetic figures. Thus, a maid compares Vasavadatta to the crescent moon obscured by the mist, and describes Udayana as the God of Love incarnate, but without the bow and arrow. The nurses, too, are not without something worth saying. The nurse of Padmavati tells Vasavadatta, in reply to her wonder at Udayana's grieving so much for Vasavadatta and yet celebrating his betrothal to another so soon, "Madam, the holy truths taught in our scriptures get imbedded in the hearts of great men, and, so, they easily get consoled in the midst of great calamities." She is also shrewd enough to find out events as they happen, and soon after they happen, and consoles Vasavadatta by telling her that Udayana went to Rajagriha for some other purpose, and that the king, finding in him a combination of wealth, beauty and nobility, himself offered Padmavati's hand to him.

The nurse of Vasavadatta is no whit behind the nurse of Padmavati. Just like the two chamberlains, the two nurses belong to the same category. Vasavadatta's nurse chides Udayana for exhibiting excessive sorrow, and carries about the painting of Vasavadatta with pardonable pride and self-importance, and shows it to Padmavati, and delivers Angaravati's message to Udayana with the consummate ability of a messenger of modern days. There is no doubt that Bhasa loved these maids and nurses as much as he did his major characters. In the scheme of his dramas, the little ones had their parts to play as much as the great ones.

The hermit woman shown in Act I of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" is a delightful figure, though we get only just a vision of her. India's pride is that the highest in the land are not soldiers or kings, but saints and hermits. Bhasa, an upholder of the Indian system, brings the truth home vividly by making this obscure hermit woman receive the princess Padmavati *sitting*. She talks to Padmavati naturally, as woman to woman, with none of that awareness of difference between a princess and a commoner, which is so painfully jarring and destructive of essential human friendship. She tells Padmavati that a hermitage is the home of all wayfarers, and, so, she is welcome. She does not say, as many ladies would do now, that the hermitage belongs to the king, and that the Princess should *honour* it by walking into it, but welcomes Padmavati as a *wayfarer*. Those who think that ancient India lacked human dignity and self-respect and the democratic instinct had better ponder over this. She is also a kindly woman interested in the welfare of all people. She makes loving enquiries about Padmavati's marriage, and ends by wishing Padmavati a good husband soon, and by wishing Vasavadatta a speedy reunion with her husband. She is also shrewd. On looking at Vasavadatta, she remarks that she must also be a Princess, thus piercing through her disguise as humble Avantika.

Not content with giving an individuality to human beings, the great Bhasa wanted to give individuality even to trees, hermitages and instruments. The hermitage near Rajagriha has got its individual description. The Veena, Ghoshavati, has been so described and extolled, both generally and in verse 12 of Act II of "Yaugandharayana's Vows" and in verses 1, 2 and 3 of Act VI of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", that it has got an individuality far above the average of human characters in modern dramas. Such is the magic wand of Bhasa. No wonder that Bana remarked about the many and interesting characters in his plays!

YAUGANDHARAYANA'S VOWS.

CHARACTERS.

Men:—

Yaugandharayana: Udayana's chief minister; he appears in the guise of a madman also.

Sramanaka: Udayana's minister Rumanvan, disguised as a Buddhist Monk.

Jester: Udayana's boon companion, Vasantaka.

Brahmana: A man of Yaugandharayana.

Hamsaka: Udayana's aide-de-camp.

Gatrasevaka: Yaugandharayana's spy disguised as the mahout of Bhadravati, Vasavadatta's elephant.

Salaka: Yaugandharayana's intended messenger.

Nirmundaka: Major Domo of Yaugandharayana's house.

Mahasena: Pradyota, King of Avanti, Vasavadatta's father.

Bharatarohaka: Mahasena's chief minister.

Badarayana: Mahasena's chamberlain.

A Guard: Vasavadatta's servant.

Two orderlies: Bharatarohaka's men.

Women:—

Angaravati: Mahasena's queen.

Vijaya: Female door-keeper in Vatsaraja's palace.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS REFERRED TO, BUT NOT APPEARING, IN THE PLAY.

Men:—

Udayana: King of Vatsa.

Salankayana: Mahasena's minister.

Women:—

Vasavadatta: Daughter of Mahasena.

The Queen: Mother of Vatsaraja.

ACT I.

Prelude.

(At the end of the Opening, enter the Stage-Director).

Stage-Director:

May the son of Yugandhara,[1]
The lord of many mighty hosts,
He who is called the Infant King,
Full of vigour exceeding great,
Who gave victory to Indra,
In spite of all Taraka's boasts,
With his energy amazing,
Protect you from all blows of Fate! (1).

(walks about looking towards the back of the stage)

Come here, my good lady.

(Enter an actress)

Actress: Here I am, sir.

Stage-Director: Sing a song, my lady, and put this audience into a good humour. After that, we shall begin our play. Why this hesitation? Aren't you going to sing?

Actress: Sir, this very day, I dreamt that all was not well with my relatives. I wish you would send a man to find out if all is well with them.

Stage-Director: Certainly.

A man shall I send, able, and to you attached,

(Voice behind the scene)

Salaka, are you ready?

Stage-Director: Like the one by Yaugandharayana despatched. (2)

(Exeunt)

(Prelude ends)

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[1] Yugandhara, or the Lord of Universal destruction at the end of every aeon, is Siva, the third member of the Hindu Trinity, the first two being Brahma, the Creator, and Vishnu, the Preserver. His younger son, the Infant King, is Skanda or Kartikeya or Subrahmanya who saved Indra from a terrible demon called Taraka. The elder son, or Adult King, is Ganesa or the Belly-God.

By paronomasia, the names of all the principal characters in the play are introduced in this verse, by words applicable to these and to the gods alike.

(Enter Yaugandharayana with Salaka).

Yaugandharayana: Salaka, are you ready?

Salaka: Yes, sir.

Yaugandharayana: You have a very long way to go.

Salaka: My love for you will make me go much further, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Ha! A strong man or a devoted man will go far. That is why they say:

A difficult task to faithful friends entrust,
Or to those with qualities held in esteem;
But, howev'r good we make the plan we trust,
Success or failure depends on Fate, I deem. (3)

Tomorrow, the king leaves the Bamboo Forest and goes, through three dense forests, to the Elephant Forest. You must meet him before he starts.

Salaka: I suppose, sir, I shall be sent with a letter containing the information to be conveyed.

Yaugandharayana: Vijaya!

(Enter Vijaya).

Vijaya: Here I am, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Vijaya, hurry up with that letter and the auspicious cord.[2]

Vijaya: All right, sir. (Exit).

Yaugandharayana: Have you ever been that way before?

Salaka: No, sir, but I have heard about it.

Yaugandharayana: That too is a sign of wisdom. Well, we have received a report that Pradyota means to dupe our king by placing an artificial blue elephant in the Elephant Forest, surrounding it with so-called forest elephants. I hope that our master has not already been deceived into believing in the reality of this blue elephant. But, on how terribly afraid Pradyota must be of the King of the Vatsas! The inefficiency of his vast army is clear:—

His army is large, but lacks unity of aim;
Brave warriors there are, no doubt, in that array;
But they don't love him; so, instead of waging war,
He prefers to take to tricks, like this deed of shame,
Which cannot take him or his country very far:

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[2] Worn as a kind of protection against demons, enemies, evil influences etc. It is intended for the King of Vatsa.

He finds his unloving army useless for fray
In the open battle fields, like a loveless wife
To her husband in life's daily, unceasing strife. (4)

(*Enter Vijaya*).

Vijaya: Here is the letter, Sir. The queen-mother says "The auspicious cord is being urgently prepared and blessed by all the married ladies."

Yaugandharayana: Vijaya, kindly tell Her Majesty, on my behalf, "please let me have at once an auspicious cord, whether prepared and blessed by all the married ladies, or by only one."

Vijaya: Yes, sir. (Exit).

(*Enter Nirmundaka*).

Nirmundaka: I wish you good health, sir.

Yaugandharayana: What is it, Nirmundaka?

Nirmundaka: Hamsaka, His Majesty's aide-de-camp, has come here, sir, from camp.

Yaugandharayana: Why has Hamsaka come alone? Salaka, rest awhile. Either you will have to go thereafter at triple speed, or, not at all.

Salaka: Very well, sir. (Exit).

Yaugandharayana: Nirmundaka, bring in Hamsaka.

Nirmundaka: All right, sir. (Exit).

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) Hamsaka has never left the king's side before. His coming here alone now fills my mind with apprehensions. For,

Like a man who has left his kinsmen in trouble
And gone to a foreign land and has just returned,
My mind's on tenter-hooks as I'm quite unable
To say if the news is good or bad till I've learned. (5)

(*Enter Hamsaka and Nirmundaka*).

Nirmundaka: Come in, sir.

Hamsaka: Where is His Honour?

Nirmundaka: There he is, standing. Go up to him.

Hamsaka: (approaching) Your health, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Hamsaka, our king has not yet gone to the Elephant Forest, I hope?

Hamsaka: Alack, sir, the king reached that forest yesterday.

Yaugandharayana: Alas, it is useless then to send any messenger now. We have been duped. Is there any room for hope? Or, should we end our lives this very day?

Hamsaka: The king still lives, sir.

Yaugandharayana: "Still lives" you say. That means that a lesser calamity has befallen him. Our master must have been captured.

Hamsaka: Your guess is right, sir. The king has been captured.

Yaugandharayana: What, my royal master captured! Alas! Pradyota has achieved a great thing by his good fortune. From this day forth, the incompetence and shame of the ministers of the Vatsa King stand self-revealed. Where is Rumanvan now, so wise in providing for events before they happen? What has become of the cavalry?

Our devoted and loving cavalry troops,
Well-born, well-trained, replete with warlike virtues,
Did they get lost in the meandering loops
Of the forest path, or did they, like statues,
Stand and fight against unequal odds and die?
Or were they bought with enemy gold, and fly? (6)

Hamsaka: If all his men were with him, our king would not have suffered this calamity, sir.

Yaugandharayana: What! My master was not accompanied by the whole of his men?

Hamsaka: No, sir. Be pleased to listen.

Yaugandharayana: You are tired. Sit down.

Hamsaka: All right, sir. (sits down.) Hear the story, sir. Yesternight, just before dawn, the pleasantest time for riding, the king crossed the Narmada river by the Sandy Ford. He left the court ladies in his camp in the Bamboo Forest, and then set out for the Elephant Forest by a narrow track with only his royal umbrella-carriers, and a small body of men trained to tackle elephants.

Yaugandharayana: Then?

Hamsaka: When the sun was just an arrow-shot above the horizon, and we had gone many miles, and were only two miles away from the Madagandhira Mountain, we saw a herd of elephants standing in a half-dry pond and

throwing up mud, and looking like a half-finished and uneven stone wall.[3]

Yaugandharayana: And then?

Hamsaka: While our troops were reconnoitering, and the herd of elephants had huddled together, getting suspicious about our movements, an infantry-man, the author of all this trouble, went up to our master.

Yaugandharayana: Stop! Did he not say " Two miles from here, I saw an elephant that was blue all over, except for the nails and tusks, and with its body hidden by jasmine creepers and *sal* trees."?

Hamsaka: What! Your Honour knew about that! Then the calamity has occurred while you were fully awake!

Yaugandharayana: Alas, Hamsaka, a man may be awake, and yet, Fate, which is stronger than man, may prevail. Proceed.

Hamsaka: Then, our master gave that wicked fellow a hundred gold pieces and said to us " It must be what is called an emperor-elephant, or *Neelakuvalayatanu*, described in a book on elephants which I have read. Please watch this herd carefully while I go with my lute and tame and bring in that emperor-elephant."

Yaugandharayana: Did Rumanvan sit quiet, and do nothing to prevent this rash enterprise of our master?

Hamsaka: No, no. The minister tried to dissuade the king. He begged him hard not to go alone. He said to him " It is quite possible for you to catch even the elephants of the quarters,[4] Airavana and the rest. But the frontier districts are always troublesome and lawless, being difficult to supervise and govern. People living on the frontier are generally shameless and low-born. So, let us leave the infantry men to deal with this herd, and let us all go together. Your Majesty should not go alone."

Yaugandharayana: Rumanvan said all this to the king in the presence of the big men? I wish I too could show the same unspeakable devotion to the king. Go on. What happened then?

Hamsaka: Then, the king swore by his own life that he would go alone, and thus effectively silenced the minis-

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[3] The grey backs of the elephants splashed with wet mud will look like a half-finished wall of dark-grey boulders.

[4] The elephants guarding the eight quarters of the earth.

ter. He got down from his elephant Neela-Valahaka,[5] and mounted his horse Sundarapatala,[6] and, when the sun had not yet reached the meridian, rode away with only twenty infantry men.

Yaugandharayana: May he be victorious! Alas, in my love for him, I forgot what you told me. Well, proceed.

Hamsaka: After we had gone double the two miles mentioned by that infantry-man, we saw that counterfeit of a divine elephant at a distance of a hundred bows,[7] its blue colour lost in the shadows of *sal* trees of the same hue, and only the tusks gleaming in the sunlight and sticking out as if they had no body attached to them.

Yaugandharayana: Say rather, Hamsaka, that you saw our calamity. Go on.

Hamsaka: Then, the king got down from his horse, saluted the gods, took his lute in his hand, and approached that false elephant. Just then, we heard a huge and concerted uproar behind us.

Yaugandharayana: An uproar? Proceed.

Hamsaka: When we turned round to find out the cause of the uproar, that artificial elephant, manned by regular soldiers in full armour, instead of by mahouts, advanced towards us!

Yaugandharayana: And then?

Hamsaka: Then the king cheered up the young men of good family who were with him, calling them by their names and family names, and telling them "This is one of Pradyota's tricks. Come with me. With my prowess, I shall nullify the foeman's ruse, despite all his unfair advantage." With these words, he entered the serried ranks of the enemy army.

Yaugandharayana: What! Entered the serried ranks of the enemy army! But, stay, he was right.

What else could he do, that hero?
High-minded, vexed at being caught
In such a wily strategem?
Set in narrow strait, he has fought,
Scorning to flee, of kings a gem,
Relying on his courage so! (7)

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5 "Dark cloud."
6 "Pink Beauty."
7 About 200 yards.

Then?

Hamsaka: Mounted on his horse Sundarapatala, who obeyed his slightest moves, he went about as if sporting, and struck at the foe with even greater force than he had intended, exerting himself to the utmost against those enemies, so vastly superior in numbers. Then, when all his followers were dead, and I alone was left to protect him, no, no, to be protected by him, he fainted, at that unlucky hour of sunset, wearied with fighting the whole day, and fell from his horse, covered with innumerable injuries.

Yaugandharayana: The king fainted? And then?

Hamsaka: Then, they insulted and outraged him as they liked, binding his person, like a common man's, with rough creepers, plucked haphazardly from the nearest thicket.

Yaugandharayana: What, outraged the king thus!

Those arms which have many a friend's distress relieved
By a close embrace, have drawn the bow against odds,
And sent countless arrows far, arms which are believed
To have saluted but Brahmans, elders and gods,
Arms, thick, muscular and strong, like elephant's trunk,
Attached to shoulders broad, with sinews expanding,
Which have vibrated with his great bow's vibrating,
Arms fit for gold bracelets, they're now in bonds and sunk!
(8)

When did the king recover consciousness?

Hamsaka: When those wicked fellows had done with their insults, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Thank God, only his body was disgraced, and not his name. Then?

Hamsaka: When those wretches saw that the king had recovered his consciousness, they scattered in all directions, paying an unconscious tribute to the valour of our king by crying out "He killed my brother", "He killed my father", "He killed my son", "He killed my friend", and so forth.

Yaugandharayana: What happened then?

Hamsaka: A strange thing, sir. After egging one another on to attack him, one of them resolved to do the horrible deed. He dragged the king by his hair, which had become dishevelled during the fight, and made him face

south.[8] Then, taking his sword in his hand, he took a run to deliver a forcible blow with great momentum.

Yaugandharayana: Stop a moment, Hamsaka. Let me recover my breath!

Hamsaka: The wretch, rushing at great speed thus, stumbled where the ground was slippery with pools of blood, and fell down, and perished.

Yaugandharayana: The wretch has fallen so! See,

That land which he from invasion did protect,
That land which he from unrighteousness did save,
It, though inanimate, did now, in effect,
Save him who formerly to it so much gave. (9)

Hamsaka: Just then, one of Pradyota's ministers, Salankayana, who had been hit by our master with his spear and rendered unconscious in the previous fight, recovered consciousness, and rushed to the spot, and ordered his men not to commit any more violence on our master.

Yaugandharayana: And then?

Hamsaka: Then, he saluted the king, an unexpected courtesy at that time, and released him from his bonds.

Yaugandharayana: My master released! Well-done, Salankayana! Adversity can make even an enemy into a friend. Hamsaka, I feel somewhat relieved now. And what did that good man do next?

Hamsaka: The king was too badly wounded to ride; so, Salankayana laid him in a litter, and, with many small attentions and courteous expressions of sympathy for his injuries, had him taken to Ujjaini in that litter carried on the shoulders of men.

Yaugandharayana: My master taken away!

Ah, this is the disgrace we feared
When he to that dread forest neared.
His very pride has led him on,
Till misery made him her pawn.
That trick of Pradyota has fared
Far better than to hope he dared. (10)
Our master never cared for Pradyota before,
How will he face him, as prisoner, I wonder!
He who has never known but polite words before,
How will he bear harsh, insulting words, I wonder!
He whose righteous anger blazed forth unchecked before,

[8] The region of Yama, the lord of the dead.

How will he now curb and control it, I wonder!
For humiliation is a prisoner's lot
Be he treated ill or well, insulted or not. (11)

(Enter female door-keeper)

Female door-keeper: Here's the auspicious cord, sir.

Yaugandharayana:

Ah, what use now are all these things, brought
When our good fortune has come to nought?
They're like the meaningless lustration
Of horses after the war's cessation. (12)

Female door-keeper: Here is the auspicious cord, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Put it down, Vijaya.

Female door-keeper: What am I to say to the Queen-Mother, sir?

Yaugandharayana: Vijaya, it is thus.

Female door-keeper: What is thus?

Yaugandharayana: This.

Female door-keeper: Tell me, sir, tell me.

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) Well, I cannot hide this matter. I shall have to tell Her Majesty. (Aloud) Vijaya, steel your heart (whispers into her ear). It is like this.

Female door-keeper: Ah!

Yaugandharayana: Your name is Vijaya, is it not? So, don't break down.

Female door-keeper: I shall go and tell her, unhappy me!

Yaugandharayana: Vijaya, don't tell Her Majesty at once that the king has been taken prisoner. A mother's heart is proverbially weak, from affection. It must be protected.

Female door-keeper: Sir, how am I to break the news to her, then?

Yaugandharayana: Listen.

Tell her first of War and all its evil chances,
Let her feel greatly apprehensive for his fate,
When her fear and grief have taken root and branches
Tell her all the facts, and our master's present state. (13)

Female door-keeper: Sir, I can manage it now. (Exit).

Yaugandharayana: Hamsaka, why didn't you go with the king?

Hamsaka: Sir, I had resolved to do so, but Salankayana sent me here, telling me "Go to Kausambi and relate all this news."

Yaugandharayana: What was his idea, to make us despair on hearing the news, or to get rid of a devoted servant of our master?

Hamsaka: Very likely, both, sir.

Yaugandharayana: His arrogance is clearly seen in this. But he can very well afford to rejoice, as his undertaking has succeeded. Did not the king say anything about me?

Hamsaka: He did, sir. As I took leave of him, he appeared to be anxious to say many things. At last, half-blinded with bunded tears, he said to me " Go and see Yaugandha. . . ." (stops, ashamed at having named the minister).

Yaugandharayana: Go on. You are only repeating the king's words.

Hamsaka: " Go and see Yaugandharayana " said he.

Yaugandharayana: What! Did he say nothing about the council of ministers, and mention only me?

Hamsaka: That is so.

Yaugandharayana: If that is so, it is because I have not taken enough precautions, because I have not done anything in return for the food I have eaten at his hands, or for the honour and dignity he has bestowed upon me.

Hamsaka: Very likely, sir.

Yaugandharayana: The king shall see me transformed.

He shall find me wherever he is,
In en'my city or in fetters,
In forest deep, aye in death's abyss,
Always devoted to his matters.
I'll outwit that king who thinks he's won,
And be by my belov'd master's side,
And be praised for faithful service done,
When he'll once more to his city ride. (14)

(Behind the scene)

Alas! Alas! our master's taken!

Yaugandharayana:

These women are trying to relieve their grief
With all this heart-rending weeping and wailing:
Their action brings into prominent relief
The ministers' blundering and floundering. (15)

(Enter the female door-keeper)

Female door-keeper: The queen-mother, sir . . .

Yaugandharayana: Yes?

Female door-keeper: She says . . .

Yaugandharayana: What does she say?

Female door-keeper: "The brave king of Vatsa, loved by many friends, has come to this terrible fate. What shall we do to counter it? Let us honour his friends and set the thing right. You are a very wise man. You won't become despondent in adversity, or lose heart and remain inactive in difficulties, or give up hope when tricked, or commit suicide when you fail. I am telling you specially this 'You were first a friend of my Vatsa Raja. Then alone, you became a minister. You are like a son unto me. Son, bring my son to me!'"

Yaugandharayana: Ah! The queen-mother has uttered brave words worthy of this royal house. I am beholden to her for her esteem for me. Vijaya, some water.

Female door-keeper: Yes, sir (goes in and comes back) Here is water, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Give it to me (sips the water ceremonially) Vijaya, what did the queen-mother say?

Female door-keeper: "Son, bring my son to me."

Yaugandharayana: Hamsaka, what did the king say?

Hamsaka: "Go and see Yaugandharayana."

Yaugandharayana: Vijaya,

If our master, caught by th' en'my, like the moon
By Rahu vile, I do not liberate soon,
My name's not Yaugandharayana, I say,
Be the consequences of this what they may![9] (16)

Female door-keeper: Amen, sir (Exit).

(Enter Nirmundaka)

Nirmundaka: Sir, a wonderful thing has happened. A number of Brahmans were being feasted for the sake of our king's welfare. Another Brahman, dressed like a mad man, saw them eating and laughed aloud and said to them "Eat in peace, sirs, and eat to your hearts' content. This royal family will prosper." Immediately after he said this, he vanished.

Yaugandharayana: Is this true?

(Enter a Brahman)

Brahman: Here are the queer clothes that reverend Brahman wore and left behind when he left, for some purpose or other of his own. Sir, it was the reverend Dwaipa-

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[9] This is his first vow.

yana[10] himself that came here disguised in these madman's clothes.

Yaugandharayana: So, Dwaipayana came here!

Brahman: Yes.

Yaugandharayana: Let me see those clothes.

Brahman: Here they are, sir.

Yaugandharayana: (putting on those clothes) Here I am, completely transformed. I feel that I have reached the king's presence already. These clothes were left by him for my sake:—

This madman's guise donned by the holy man,
I'll put on, and, then, free my king I can. (17)

(Enter female door-keeper)

Female door-keeper: Sir, the queen-mother says that she wishes to see her son.[11]

Yaugandharayana: I shall come at once. Good sir, wait for me in the worship-room.

Brahman: Very well. (Exit)

Yaugandharayana: Hamsaka, you may now rest awhile.

Hamsaka: All right, sir. (Exit)

Yaugandharayana: Lead the way, Vijaya.

Female door-keeper: Yes, sir.

Yaugandharayana:

Fire is got ev'n from wood by constant churning,
Water is got from earth by patient digging:
Nothing's impossible for men of daring
Who go the proper way, ever-succeeding! (18)

(Exeunt Omnes)

(End of Act I)

ACT II

Interlude

(The Palace of Mahasena in Ujjain)

(Enter the chamberlain, Badarayana)

Chamberlain: Abhiraka,[1] Abhiraka, go and tell the gate-keeper these words of Mahasena:—"The noble Jaivanti, the preceptor of the king of Kasi,[2] has arrived here to-

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10 "The island-born." Vyasa, a great saint.

11 Here it means Yaugandharayana.

1 The messenger is not on the stage.

2 Benares.

day on a mission. Let him be lodged comfortably, and not merely rendered the ordinary treatment accorded to the usual envoys. Every effort must be made to render him the hospitality due to an honoured guest." Ah, so it goes on from day to day. Embassies are sent by royal houses of exalted rank to ask for the hand of the Princess in marriage. But, Mahasena does not say "yes" or "no" to any one. Now, why is this? Surely, it is because Fate seems to have taken the matter of the Princess's marriage in its own hand. For,

That man who's destined to wed her,
His messenger has not yet come:
That's why our king does not bother
To discuss the merits of those come. (1)

The fear on the face of the servants here shows that the master is at hand. Ah, here comes Mahasena.

Here he comes from the grove of golden palms
Like Kartikeya[3] from the reed-forest;
Gold armlets encircle his sturdy arms,
And are with durva[4]-grass-like sapphires set. (2)

(Exit)

(End of the Interlude)

(Enter the King of Ujjain with his retinue)

King:

Countless kings on their coronets put
Humbly the dust from my charger's foot:
But, though all these are now my servants,
There'll be no end to my discontents
Till he, so proud of elephant lore,
The noble Vatsa, bows at my door. (3)

Badarayana!

Chamberlain: Victory to Mahasena!

King: Is the noble Jaivanti properly lodged?

Chamberlain: Yes, lodged and suitably entertained.

King: You have done the proper thing. You are always zealous for the glory of our royal house. A fitting reception is accorded to all visitors. Now, one curious thing: every one I question about the marriage of the

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[3] Skanda, the god of war. He is supposed to have emerged from a reed-forest.

[4] A deep-blue grass.

princess conceals his own opinion. (Looks at the chamberlain) You look as if you want to say something, Badarayana.

Badarayana: It's nothing. Something about this marriage struck me.

King: Don't hesitate. This business concerns everybody. Speak out freely.

Chamberlain: Mahasena, this is what I want to say. Day after day, envoys are sent by royal houses of the proper rank to ask for the princess's hand. But your Majesty rejects none, and accepts none. Now, why is that?

King: Badarayana, this is how it is. I am so fond of Vasavadatta, and so anxious that the bridegroom should have all the best qualities, that I cannot make up my mind.

Of noble birth undoubtedly must he be:
Of heart tender and sympathetic to hers,
It's a gentle but powerful quality:
He must also have beauty, to avoid slurs
By ladies, though it's no virtue or safe guide:
Strong must he be to protect his youthful bride. (4)

Chamberlain: All these qualities will not be found combined in one person now, except in Mahasena.

King: That's what makes me undecided.

A father has to take the greatest care
To find a fitting mate for his daughter:
The rest depends on Fate; I'm not aware
Of any other rule in such affair. (5)

But, the mothers always grieve when a daughter is given away in marriage. So, ask the queen to come here.

Chamberlain: As your Majesty commands. (Exit).

King: This embassy from the King of Benares reminds me of Salankayana who went to capture the Vatsa King. Another day, and no news from that Brahman.

No doubt, our plan was based on his favourite sport,
And our men sent out are skilled and dependable:
But all his ministers are zealous and able:
And will exert to th' utmost and give him support. (6)

(Enter the Queen with her retinue)

Queen: Victory to Mahasena!

King: Pray be seated.

Queen: As my lord commands (sits down).

King: Where is Vasavadatta?

Queen: She has gone to Uttara, a lady musician, for taking a lesson on the *Narada* lute.

King: How did she come to suddenly take to music like this?

Queen: She saw her friend, Kanchanamala, playing on a lute, and wanted to learn it herself.

King: That's just like a girl.

Queen: There's something I was asked to tell you, Mahasena.

King: What is it?

Queen: She would like to have a teacher, she says.

King: What does she want a teacher for, now that she is about to be married? Let her husband teach her.

Queen: Oh, has the time really come for my little girl to get married and leave me?

King: Come, now, you are daily pestering me about her marriage with the words "It must be arranged." Why then are you distressed?

Queen: I am anxious to see her married, no doubt. It is the thought of separation from her that pains me. To whom is she to be married?

King: Nothing is settled yet.

Queen: What, not yet?

King:

You're ashamed at the thought that she's not yet married,
And yet at the thought of her marriage, you're worried:
Caught betwixt the twin fires of love and dread duty,
A mother's heart's baked, and quivers with anxiety. (7)

Vasavadatta has attained the proper age to attend on her father-in-law. And today there has come yet another envoy, the noble Jaivanti, preceptor to the King of Benares. I am rather attracted by his reputation. (to himself) She says not a word. But she is agitated, and her eyes are full of tears. How can she come to any conclusion? Anyhow, I shall tell her about it. (aloud) As suitors for alliance with us, there are the kings. . . .

Queen: Why all these details? Give her to such a one that we shall never have cause to rue the day.

King: Oh, yes, it is quite easy for you to say that now, leaving me to listen to your reproaches later on. This is a difficult matter. So, do make your own choice, my queen. Listen:—

The monarchs of Magadha, Kasi, Vanga,
Surashtra, Mithila and Surasena.[5]
Are all suitors, and our decision await:
All these attract me by their qualities great:
I can't find out the best, though I rack my brain:
Who's most worthy, give your opinion plain. (8)

(Enter the chamberlain)

Chamberlain: The king of the Vatsas.

King: What about the king of the Vatsas ?

Chamberlain: Pardon, Your Majesty, pardon. In my haste to give you the good news, I forgot the court etiquette.[6]

King: What good news ?

Queen: (Rising) Long live the King !

King: (Joyfully) Don't you want to hear the good news, my queen ? Pray, sit down.

Queen: As my lord commands (sits down).

King: (to chamberlain who has prostrated himself) Rise up and speak freely.

Chamberlain: (Rising) The king of the Vatsas has been captured by the honourable minister, Salankayana.

King: (Delighted) What did you say ?

Chamberlain: (Repeats) The king of the Vatsas has been captured by the honourable minister, Salankayana.

King: Udayana ?

Chamberlain: Who else ?

King: Satanika's son ?

Chamberlain: Of course.

King: Sahasranika's grandson ?

Chamberlain: The very same.

King: The lord of Kausambi ?

Chamberlain: Yes.

King: The expert musician ?

Chamberlain: So they say.

King: Actually, the king of the Vatsas ?

Chamberlain: Yes, the king of the Vatsas, of course.

King: Is Yaugandharayana dead ?

Chamberlain: Not he. He is at Kausambi.

King: Then, I don't believe that the king of the Vatsas has been captured.

Chamberlain: Oh, yes; Your Majesty must believe me.

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[5] Behar, Benares, Bengal, Gujerat, Tirhut, Modern Muttra.

[6] He omits to say "Victory to Mahasena!" on entering.

King:

I can no more believe that Vatsa's king is captive,
Though you say it, than I can think that Mandara great.[7]
Was lifted on by you to your palm diminutive:
Foes say that his valour in war will never abate
Whatever the odds, and every one here praises
Yaugandharayana's strategy and devices. (9)

Chamberlain: Pardon me, Your Majesty. I am an old Brahman. I have never told your Majesty a lie.

King: That is so. Who is the welcome messenger Salankayana has sent?

Chamberlain: He has sent no messenger. The minister has come himself in the fastest chariot, with the Vatsa king.

King: Come himself! What joy! From to-day let the army lay the armour aside and rest at ease. From now on, kings will have no fear, and there will be no need of spies. In short, I have become Mahasena only to-day.

Queen: The minister has brought him here?

Chamberlain: Yes.

Queen: Then, we need not be in a hurry to affiance Vasavadatta to any one at present.

King: This man is my enemy, vanquished in battle, remember! Badarayana, where is Salankayana?

Chamberlain: He is waiting at the Auspicious Gate.

King: Go and tell Bharatarohaka to receive the minister with the honours due to a prince, and to bring him in with the Vatsa king in front of him.

Chamberlain: As Your Majesty commands.

King: Stay a moment.

Chamberlain: Yes?

King: Let none be prevented from seeing the Vatsa king.

Let the citizens one and all see my foe
Whom they, till now, by his deeds alone did know,
Let them see him, all fury now that he's caught,
Like an angry lion for sacrifice brought. (10)

Chamberlain: As Your Majesty commands. (Exit).

Queen: We have known several occasions of rejoicings in this royal house, but I do not remember ever having seen Mahasena so pleased before.

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[7] A legendary mountain, used as a churning-rod for churning the milky sea.

King: Nor do I remember ever hearing such good news as the capture of the Vatsa king.

Queen: It really is the king of the Vatsas ?

King: Why, of course.

Queen: I hear that many royal houses have sent messengers seeking an alliance with us. This prince alone has not sent a single messenger so far.

King: My queen, he ignores the very name, Mahasena, let alone desiring an alliance with us by marriage.

Queen: Ignores your very name ! Is he a mere boy or an illiterate fool ?

King: He may be boyish, but he is certainly not an illiterate fool.

Queen: Then, what makes him so arrogant ?

King: Birth in the Bharata line of kings, with its long roll of Royal Sages and its tradition of Vedic learning, has made him proud. His unrivalled knowledge of music has increased his pride. His youthful beauty has turned his head. His subjects' remarkable attachment to him makes him over-confident.

Queen: Dear, dear, the very qualities one would desire in a son-in-law ! By what perversity has his disability arisen?

King: My queen, how can you admire an unworthy object ? Listen:—

Like a forest fire burning ev'rywhere,
The fierce flames of my orders nowhere meet
A challenge till in Vatsa's realm they dare
To quench them, and my laws with jeerings greet. (11)

(Enter chamberlain)

Chamberlain: Victory to Mahasena ! Salankayana has been accorded an honourable reception, as commanded. He sends this message to Your Majesty. "Here is that jewel of a lute, Ghoshavati, which used to be played by the Bharatas in Vatsaraja's family. Be pleased to accept it, oh Mahasena". (shows the lute).

King: I accept it as an auspicious trophy of victory. (Takes it). So, this is the famous Ghoshavati, that lute

Sweet to the ear, giving out bewitching tunes
When played with the nails glancing along the strings,
Wild elephants' hearts are tamed by its fine runes
Ev'n as with a sage's magic words with wings. (12)

Ah, great is the joy derived from using, as we like, the treasures won in battle.

Gopalaka, my eldest son,
Is an adept in politics,
But's innocent of poetics:
And Palaka, the younger one
Is a lover of athletics,
But love of music he has none. (13)

So, to whom can I give this lute with profit?

Did you say, my queen, that Vasavadatta has taken to the lute?

Queen: Yes.

King: Then, give this to her.

Queen: If you give her this lute, she will be madder after the lute than ever.

King: Let her play on, play on! It will not be so easy to play in her father-in-law's house. Badarayana, where is the princess?

Chamberlain: She is with the minister.

King: And the king of Vatsa?

Chamberlain: He had become so tractable, and had so many wounds on his feet and body, that he was carried into the Middle Palace on a litter.

King: I am sorry to hear that he has received so many wounds. This is the penalty he pays for his undaunted valour. In this state, it will be cruel to neglect him. Badarayana, go and ask Bharatarohaka to attend to the treatment of his wounds.

Chamberlain: As your Majesty commands.

King: Nay, wait a moment.

Chamberlain: I am waiting.

King: Every gesture of his should receive attention. His wishes should be inferred from his expression. There should be no reference to war or defeat, and a blessing should be uttered if he sneezes or does anything like that. The compliments should be tactful and suited to the occasions.

Chamberlain: As Your Majesty commands (goes and comes back). Victory to Mahasena! The Vatsa king had his wounds dressed on the way. It is too soon, they say, to do a second dressing. The midday sun is at its height.

King: Where is that heroic warrior now?

Chamberlain: Near the Peacocks' Perches.

King: Oh, fie! That's no place to shelter in. Bid them take him into the Mosaic Room, so that he may be shielded from the sun.

Chamberlain: As Your Majesty commands (goes and comes back). Your Majesty's orders have been carried out. The minister Bharatarohaka desires an interview.

King: Evidently, he does not like this kind treatment of the Vatsa king. It goes against his policy. I shall bring him round to my views.

Queen: Is the marriage settled?

King: No, not yet quite decided.

Queen: There is no need for hurry. My little girl is still quite a child.

King: As you please. You can go inside now.

Queen: As my lord commands. (Exit with retinue).

King: (Plunged in thought):

First his pride made me his foe; when he was taken,
I was barely neutral: but now that I'm hearing
About his sorry plight, exhaustion in fighting,
And danger to life, I confess I am shaken. (14)

(Exeunt Omnes)

(End of Act II).

ACT III.[1]

(A temple in Ujjain. Secret meeting of the jester and the two Ministers of Udayana in disguise.)

(Enter the Jester, disguised as a beggar.)

Jester: (gesticulating) What! I kept my bowl of sweets[2] on the verandah of this temple and counted the gold pieces I got as gift along with it, and tied them up. Now I turn round, and I can't see my bowl of sweets (reflecting). That fellow was following me, but I gave him one sweetmeat, and he was satisfied, and has not followed

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[1] The first half of this Act uses a kind of cypher language having two meanings, one apparent and concerned with sweets, etc., the other deeper and concerned with the conspiracy. It is not very necessary for understanding the progress of the plot, as the second half makes everything clear. The main object of it is to provide rollicking fun, and also a kind of cross-word puzzle, as the same words are used in different senses.

[2] Modaka-mallakam. Modakas are like small balls made with jaggery, cocoanut, flour, etc.

me. The temple wall is too high for dogs to get in, and rob my sweets. The sweets were unbroken and just as they were cooked, and would not have attracted passers-by. Did I eat them myself? Let me eructate and see. Ha! Ha! Nothing but wind comes from inside me, as from an old hog's bladder. Perhaps, Siva took my bowl of sweets thinking that it belonged to his consort, Katyayani, the goddess of this temple, and, so, to him. (more gestures.) This young celibate here[3] is reputed to play many pranks, assuming various forms. Did he take my bowl of sweets? Let me have a look. Why, here's my bowl of sweets, at Siva's feet! I'll take it back. Give me, oh lord, my bowl of sweets. Oh, lord, thou art the thief of my sweets! I say, owing to my distraction and grief, I could not see properly, and mistook this bowl of sweets painted on the wall to be my bowl of sweets. Well, I shall wipe out this painting. (wipes with his hands.) I say, this painter has done his work very well. The colours are so well laid on that the more I rub them off, the brighter they shine. Wait, I shall wash it off. Now, where am I to go for water? Ah, here is a fine tank full of pure water. As I lost my bowl of sweets, let Siva lose his too!

(Behind the scene)

Sweets, sweets!

Jester: (to himself) Curse the fellow! This madman has taken my bowl of sweets and is hurrying here, with his wretched laughter, like a foaming stream of muddy water rushing along the road after the rains. Stop, madman, stop, or I'll break your head with this stick.

(Enter Yaugandharayana disguised as a madman)

Madman: Sweets, sweets!

Jester: I say, madman, give back my bowl of sweets.

Madman: What sweets? Where are they? Whose sweets? Are those sweets thrown away or tied up or eaten?

Jester: No, not eaten, nor thrown away.

Madman: My mouth is watering to eat them.

Jester: I say, madman, return my bowl of sweets. Don't cling on to another's things and get locked up.

Madman: Who will lock me up? The sweets will protect me.

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[3] Ganesa, son of Siva.

Dressed in a special way, they give satisfaction;
Their price the king paid before his benefaction:
Firm, well-girt and seemly when they are new, they rot,
If kept for too long a time, and are, therefore, soft. (1)

Jester: I say, madman, return my bowl of sweets. I must go with them as provision to my master's house.

Madman: I must go a hundred leagues with them as provision.

Jester: What, are you Indra's elephant?[4]

Madman: Aye, I am Indra's elephant. Only, the king of the gods doesn't ride on my back now. I heard that Indra was bound with fetters. Then, with lightning lashes, which licked up the showers of rain, and rotating in a whirlwind, he burst the clouds that held him in bondage.

Jester: Oh, madman, won't you return my bowl of sweets? Oh, I shall shout for help.

Madman: Shout as much as you like! Scream! Shout!

Jester: Help! help! sirs! An outrage!

Madman: I, too, will shout for help. Indra is in bondage, sirs, Indra is in bondage!

Jester: Help! help! an outrage!

(Voice behind the scenes)

Fear not, good Brahman, fear not!

Jester: (Joyfully) When the moon appears, all the stars also come. To be a Brahman is to be low down now-a-days. A Buddhist monk, with his good works, has to come and protect us, Brahmans.

(Enter Rumanvan disguised as a Buddhist monk.)

Monk: Fear not, good Brahman, fear not! Who is ~~there~~ here? What's the matter? Why these shouts for help?

Jester: I say, this monk is playing the part of a gate-keeper and policeman. Good monk, this madman here has taken my bowl of sweets, and will not give it back to me.

Monk: Sweets! Let me see them.

Madman: See them, mister monk, see them! (shows them).

Monk: (sees them, and spits) Pooh! Pooh!

Jester: Oh, how unlucky I am! I have seen my sweets back again in the madman's hands only for them to be spat on by this monk with his good works.

Monk: Oh, good madman, return, oh return, those sweets which are white as the foam on bubbling waters, large

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[4] To go so far.

and soft, made with many powders, and with oozing juice resembling toddy. Don't eat them lest they make you die of consumption!

Jester: Curse the fellows, they have given me toddy-shop *laddus* for sweets!

Monk: Return them, madman, return them, I say. If not, I shall curse you.

Madman: Gently, monk. Don't curse me. (To Jester) Take them.

Monk: Reverend Brahman, see my power!

Jester: The madman sees that the monk is about to curse him, and at once stands trembling with fear, holding my bowl of sweets at his finger-tips for delivering it to me. Good madman, give me back my bowl of sweets!

Monk: Come, sir, come. For giving you the sweets, you shall give me a blessing.

Jester: Ha! Ha! Give you a blessing for my own sweets! I accepted them as a gift from a householder. I shall give them to you, too. May you be prosperous! This madman is going towards the Fire Shrine. It is midday. This place will become deserted even before noon. I shall just go and keep the gold pieces I got as gift, in a house by the way. One man wants my cloth, another my money.

(The three enter the Fire Shrine.)

Yaugandharayana: Vasantaka, is this shrine empty?

Jester: Yes, sir, quite.

Yaugandharayana: Then, let us embrace.

Both: Good. (They embrace.)

Yaugandharayana: Both of you have exerted yourselves well. Sit down; you too.

Both: All right.

(All the three sit down.)

Yaugandharayana: Vasantaka, have you seen the king?

Jester: Yes, sir, I have seen His Majesty.

Yaugandharayana: Alas, there is no security at night. That is why we have to wait and meet in day time.

The day is gone, and we look forward to the night,
The bright dawn comes, and we look forward to the day:
As time passes thus, we've, in our troubles, to sight,
Advantages yet to come, as best as we may. (2)

Rumanvan: Well said! But, though day and night are, in theory, equal, the night is full of difficulties:—

The night's a terror to all those foes
Who cannot succeed in enterprise,
Or are not popular, for their woes
And errors the morning rays apprise. (3)

Yaugandharayana: Did you speak with the king?

Jester: Yes, sir. His Majesty kept me a long time. To-day is the fourteenth day of the fortnight, and I attended on him as he took his bath.

Yaugandharayana: Has he taken his bath?

Jester: Yes, His Majesty has bathed.

Yaugandharayana: Did he worship the gods?

Jester: Yes, but with a mere obeisance only.

Yaugandharayana: It is good to hear that the king has reached this state of convalescence. But,

The drums should beat, as of yore, when he bathes and prays,
Now, alas, his fetters clank on auspicious days
When he bathes and goes and bows before the deities;
Fate alone is to blame for these improprieties. (4)

Rumanvan: Your efforts will soon make it possible for the king to worship on the auspicious days as of yore.

Yaugandharayana: Vasantaka, go and see the king once more, and give him this message from me. "The plan discussed by us for our departure from this place must be carried out to-morrow. The elephant Nalagiri will be infuriated in the good old way, with charms and herbs. We have found opportunities to put the herbs close to where he is tied up, and where he takes his bath, has his feed, and lies down. We have arranged to start the fire and set the fumes going when the wind is blowing in the right direction. To increase his rage, we have caused the elephants opposite to it to be in ruts. A house near the stables, with no articles in it, is to be set on fire, for elephants, as you know, are so terribly afraid of fire. Conches and drums have been placed in the temples, and will be made to raise a great noise, increasing the terror of the elephants. With all that din, to be caused by our devices to-morrow, Pradyota is sure to seek your aid. So, with the concurrence of our foe, you can come out of the prison, taking the lute, which shares your captivity and sorrow, and subdue Nalagiri. Then, firmly seated on its back,

The great tusker should be driven so hot

That troops can pursue it only in thought.
When crossing the Vindhyas, lions will roar,
You must cross the range ere the roars are o'er;
Do three things in three places the same day,
In jail, in forest, and your city gay.
You will escape, my king, as you were caught,
By an elephant trick, of better sort." (5)

Rumanvan: What are you thinking about, Vasantaka?

Jester: I am thinking that all your immense efforts are in vain.

Yaugandharayana and *Rumanvan*: We don't follow you at all.

Jester: Sirs, I understand my thoughts first, and you next.

Yaugandharayana: Why should our plan fail?

Jester: Because of the opinionatedness of Vatsaraja.

Yaugandharayana: What do you mean?

Jester: You both listen to me.

Both Ministers: We are all attention.

Jester: When the eighth day of the last dark fortnight was over, the princess Vasavadatta went to worship at the temple of the Yakshini[5] opposite the prison gate, accompanied by her nurse. She was in an open palanquin, being an unmarried woman who could be seen by all freely. They had to skirt a high road which was flooded by water from a choked-up drain.

Yaugandharayana: Go on.

Jester: That very day, the king happened to be outside the prison gates, with the permission of the jail superintendent, Sivaka.

Yaugandharayana: Well?

Jester: The palanquin was halted near the prison gate for the men to change shoulders, and the king saw the princess as plainly as he liked.

Yaugandharayana: What then?

Jester: What then? Why, the prison became for him paradise itself, and he began to make love to her.

Yaugandharayana: But, surely, the king cannot have fallen in love with her.

Jester: That's exactly what he has done, sir. Troubles come in shoals.

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[5] A sylph or fairy; attendant on Durga or Parvati and holding intercourse with mortals.

Yaugandharayana: Friend, Rumanvan, steel your heart. We shall have to grow old in these disguises.

Jester: Sir, our master said to me "Tell Yaugandharayana, 'I don't like your present plan. I am thinking of a particularly telling insult to Pradyota at the very moment of my departure. Don't think I am blinded by passion. I am only seeking a telling return for my humiliation.' "

Yaugandharayana: What a speech is this, fit to be ridiculed by his foes! What consummate cheek! How grievous and distressing to friends! The king wants joys and delights at the wrong time and place. Fie!

He can still be proud though on bare earth he lies
On a bed of straw prepared with his own hands:
He can make love though chains of tremendous size
Jingle on his feet; all this one understands!
When warders deputed to guard him in jail
Call him king, why should he, in making love, fail? (6)

Jester: We have shown our devotion towards him, sir. We have done our very best. Let us now leave him to his fate and go home.

Yaugandharayana: Is it Vasantaka who talks thus? Oh, Vasantaka, you should not talk like that.

How can we abandon him
Who knows not good times from bad,
Who depends on us, his friends,
Whose eyes love and sorrow dim,
Whose heart is for ever sad,
And cannot grasp the true trends. (7)

Jester: All right, then. We shall go on spending our days here like this till old age.

Yaugandharayana: That will be most praiseworthy.

Jester: It might be if people knew why we were doing so.

Yaugandharayana: We do nothing to please the world. We do things only for our master's sake.

Jester: Even he does not realise our sacrifice.

Yaugandharayana: In course of time, he will.

Jester: When will that time come?

Yaugandharayana: When our plans succeed.

Jester: Then, you must be able to take the king out of the prison and the princess out of the inner apartments of the palace.

Rumanvan: You have put it neatly. (To Yaugandharayana). You must see to these two things.

Yaugandharayana: Both? Very well, here is my second vow.[6]

Even as Arjuna great took Subhadra,
Ev'n as an elephant uproots lotus stalks,
If Vatsa's king takes not Vasavadatta,
It is not Yaugandharayana who talks! (8)

And again:—

If the long-eyed maiden and the king
I to Kausambi do not take away
From here, then I am not, mark the thing,
Yaugandharayana, I boldly say. (9)

(Listens). I hear some noise. See what it is.

Jester: Very well, sir. (goes and comes back). People have begun to stroll about in knots, enjoying the evening air.

Rumanvan: There are four doors to this Fire Shrine. Let us break our assembly.

Yaugandharayana: Oh, no, not our assembly. Let us break up the assembly of our foes. We must all play our allotted parts well.

Both: All right (exeunt).

Madman: The Demon Rahu is swallowing the moon. Leave the moon, I say. If you don't, I shall hit you on the mouth, split it, and release the moon. Look, here's a mad horse running loose. Now he has reached the cross-roads. I shall mount him and eat my food. Here are the little masters. Beat me, masters. No, don't beat me. What do you say? That you want me to dance a little for you? Look, little masters, look. Oh, little masters, beat me once more with your sticks. No, don't you beat me, or I too will beat you.

(Exit).

(End of the Third Act).

[6] For first vow, see Act I, Verse 16.

Act IV.

Interlude.

(Ujjain).

(ENTER A SOLDIER OF MAHASENA).

Soldier: (to himself) The princess Vasavadatta wants to go bathing. But I have not been able yet to trace Gatrasevaka, the mahout of her elephant, Bhadravati. I say, Pushpadantaka, I cannot find Gatrasevaka. What do you say? That he has gone to the tavern and is drinking liquor? All right, you can go (walks round). Here is the tavern. I shall just call him. (aloud) Gatrasevaka! Gatrasevaka!

(Voice behind the Scene.)

Now, who is calling me "Gatrasevaka, Gatrasevaka!" from the high road?

Soldier: Here is Gatrasevaka coming, full of liquor, laughing loudly, dead drunk, and with eyes red as China roses. I shall not stand in his path now (moves aside).

Gatrasevaka: Now, who is this calling me "Gatrasevaka, Gatrasevaka!" from the high road? My father-in-law saw me when I came out of the liquor-shop, and very angry was he. But, oh, that morsel of meat, well-seasoned with ghee, pepper and salt, was cramped into my mouth by me along with a jug of fine liquor. When my daughter-in-law is drunk, she falls in love with me, but then her mother-in-law takes up the stick to beat me.

Blessed the folk dead drunk with spirits,
Blessed they too with the liquor stink:
Blessed are those with such great merits,
That they bathe in drink and die of drink! (1)

Wretched are those rich fools who see the misery of their daughters-in-law and yet do not turn to a cask of liquor for relief. So, I know whether there is a hell or not in the world of Yama.[1]

Soldier: (Approaching) Ho, Gatrasevaka, how long have I been looking for you! The princess Vasavadatta wants to go bathing, and her elephant Bhadravati is not

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[1] The other world. Yama is the lord of the Dead.

to be seen. You are drunk and loafing about here.

Gatrasevaka: That is right. She is drunk, her man is drunk, I am drunk, you are drunk, everything in the world is drunk.

Soldier: Never mind about everything being drunk. Why are you loafing about here, and why have you not brought Bhadravati?

Gatrasevaka: Here I loaf about, here I drink, with this I drink. Don't get angry. What is to be done?

Soldier: Stop this nonsensical talk! Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pledged her goad!

Soldier: What do you want a goad for? The gentle Bhadravati does not need it. Go and bring her at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pawned her half-moon necklet.

Soldier: It does'nt matter. We can put a flower garland on her. Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pledged her bell.

Soldier: The elephant is going to enter the water. The bell is unnecessary. Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come; Alas, I have pledged her whip!

Soldier: A whip is unnecessary for Bhadravati. Bring her at once, man!

Gatrasevaka: Yes, I will. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas!

Soldier: Aye, what now?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I have . . .

Soldier: What have you done?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, Bhadra . . .

Soldier: What about Bhadra?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, Bhadravati,

Soldier: What about Bhadravati?

Gatrasevaka: I've pawned Bhadravati, too.

Soldier: It's not your fault. It is the fault of this liquor-shop-keeper who has dared to take a pledge of the king's elephant for his liquor!

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I told him, 'don't lose the interest on your capital!'

Soldier: I say, did you hear that noise?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I know what it is. Bhadravati is breaking out of the liquor-shop-keeper's house and running away!

Soldier: What do you say?

(*Voice in the air*.)

That the king of the Vatsas has escaped, taking the princess Vasavadatta with him?

Gatrasevaka (joyfully) May my master meet with no obstacles!

Soldier: Now, you may drink and loaf about as tipsy as you like!

Gatrasevaka: Hey, who is drunk? And with what, joy or liquor? Who is intoxicated, my man? Know that we are all spies, each stationed in his place by Yaugandharayana. Here, I am giving a signal to my friends. See, there they are running about like king cobras that have cast off their sloughs. Oh, my friends, listen to my words:—

He who eats his master's food and will not fight
For him, let that wretch ne'r get holy water
With its coat of sacred *darbha* grass, or sight
Of Heaven, but go straight to Hell, the rotter! (2)

But, where is the noble Yaugandharayana? Ah, there he is!

Abandoning his madman's guise,
Armed with sharp sword and golden shield,
Wearing raiments and turban nice,
He looks on this great battle-field
Like a cloud well charged with lightning
And with the moon through it whit'ning. (3)

Oh! A big fight is in progress!

He slays many elephants and their drivers,
Num'rous heroes on foot, horses with riders;
He plunges boldly into that mighty host,
In the spirit of bravery, not of boast.
Though his sword is broken by elephant's tusk,
He draws not his foot back, but will fight till dusk!
(4)

Alas, he is captured, the noble Yaugandharayana! I must go to him, and be by his side now (*Exit*).

Soldier: What is all this? All Kausambi seems to be here, except the wall and the ornamental gate. Well, I'll go and tell the ministers about this thing. (*Exit*)

(*End of the Interlude*.)

(Enter two orderlies).

Both together: Make way, sirs, make way!

First: Ugh! My throat is about to split, and yet the shout does not seem to be loud enough for this crowd.

Second: Alas, owing to this mad excitement over the abduction of the princess Vasavadatta, nobody hears me, however loudly I shout. What do you say? Why we are asking people, to make way? Yaugandharayana has been taken prisoner. You ask how he was taken? Listen. For a time, with nothing but his sword, he made our army stand at bay, and checked its fierce onrush. But, the elephant Vijayasundara broke his sword by striking it with the tip of his tusk. So, he was captured, because of the defect in the sword, not because of any defect in the man!

First: I say, better be careful. All Kausambi is here, except the wall and the ornamental gate.

Both together: Get down, sir, get down!

(Enter Yaugandharayana, carried on a plank bed and with his hands tied).

Yaugandharayana: Here I am.

Though I'm captured, it's by mere loss of arm,
I've rescued Vatsaraja from his foes,
And freed him from all his troubles and woes,
Here I come, victorious, happy and calm. (5)

Ho! It is easy, sirs, for those without wives to go and live in the forest. Affliction is easily borne by those who have had their hearts' desire fulfilled. Death has no terror for those who have stored up merit.

Recking not enmity, fear and insult alike,
I've succeeded by deep designs, tact and valour;
The enemies' glory I have ended for good,
My friends' disgrace too I have removed, as I should:
My king is free, and my victory is secure,
I did by today's acts my fame and name ensure. (6)

Both: Make way, sirs, make way!

Yaugandharayana: Don't ask people who want to see me to make way.

Let the servants of your king, all and sundry,
Desiring to be ministers of the State,
Come and see me and realise that my fate
Is due to devotion to king and country.

This will make them fit themselves for the hard task,
Or drop the desire in king's favour to bask. (7)

Both: Make way, sirs, make way! Haven't you seen Yaugandharayana before?

Yaugandharayana: They have seen me before, but not thus.

Save as madman, with figure contemptible,
Running along the streets, they have not seen me.
Now that I have done a few deeds notable,
Let those who want to see me do so freely! (8)

(*Enter the soldier.*)

Soldier: Good news for you, sir. The king of the Vatsas has been taken prisoner.

Yaugandharayana: Oh, no. That cannot be.

Freed from prison in the city of the foe,
He mounted famous Bhadravati, you know,
And entered the forests, gaining league on league,
As moments passed; so, your news does me intrigue. (9)

Did you hear, my good sir, how he was captured?

Soldier: He was pursued on Nalagiri and caught.

Yaugandharayana: The elephant, no doubt, could have done it, but, thank god, he is not properly manned.

A tusker's speed's by training drawn out
By its long-experienced rider:
None can ride this one or take him out
Since he was left by Vatsa's ruler. (10)

Soldier: Sir, the minister says that you are to be kept in the arsenal. That place is well guarded by our men.

Yaugandharayana: What a ridiculous order!

When keeping the fire, our king, in custody,
Your ministers slept, and were not once awake;
When the jewel has been stolen already,
O'er the empty casket, what pains do they take! (11)

(*They walk round.*)

Soldier: Here is the arsenal, sir. Please enter, sir.

(*Enter another soldier.*)

Second soldier: (to the orderlies) The minister's orders! Remove his chains!

Yaugandharayana: Yes, give me that much relief. Evidently, Bharatarohaka wants to see me. And I too want to see him.

He is depressed at my words and success;

His defeat began when my schemes started;
The treatises gave him no good counsels;
No counter schemes of his have me thwarted;
Defeated by my keen intelligence,
His face is hanging down with burning shame;
Like a wrestler knocked down throughout the lines,
He is mad with anger and hates my fame. (12)

(*Enter Bharatarohaka.*)

Bharatarohaka: Where is he, where is Yaugandharayana? (to himself).

He carried out his duty by deception,
But it's painful to look at him in this state:
How upbraid him when he's ruined by devotion
For his master and has come by this dire fate?
His plans were all well-laid, and, though long hindered,
He carried on and kept on raising his head
Like an angry snake, caught and overpowered,
And put in basket, but with prowess unshed. (14)

Soldier: Yaugandharayana is awaiting you, sir, in the arsenal.

Bharatarohaka: All right.

He's waiting to reproach me with my hostile act
When with that blue elephant I his skill side-tracked.

Soldier: (to Yaugandharayana) Sir, here is the minister.

Bharatarohaka: (approaching) Hail, Yaugandharayana!

Yaugandharayana: Hail!

Soldier: Oh, what a resounding voice! The whole place is filled with that one word.

Bharatarohaka: (sitting down) The name "Yaugandharayana" was familiar to me, sir, till now, but not the man. Now, I am delighted to see you in flesh and blood.

Yaugandharayana: Delighted to see me, you say. Aye, gaze at me!

My limbs, you see, are smeared with blood, like a soldier's
As they should be after a fight, but I am calm
Like Drona's son after he had avenged his sire's
Murder by killing the slayer without a qualm. (15)

Bharatarohaka: You succeeded by means of your trickery with an elephant. Is this self-praise too necessary?

Yaugandharayana: It is amusing to hear *you* talk of trickery.

What of the elephant set up to trick us
Under the *sal* and mallik trees, without fuss?
What of our king lying helpless on the ground
Using his arm as pillow, with creepers bound?
Now it is fraud forsooth when he charms with lute
Your great elephant and effects his escape!
I but follow your lead, and you must be mute
Though you see my great triumph and can but gape. (16)

Bharatarohaka: But, surely, Yaugandharayana, it was not robbery worthy of your king to take the daughter of Mahasena as a pupil and then carry her off, without marrying her with fire as witness.

Yaugandharayana: Oh, no, don't say so. My master has already married her.

Born in the famous Bharata race,
Lord of all the Vatsas and their fate,
He would never see a maiden's face,
Or teach her, till he made her his mate. (17)

Bharatarohaka: Then again, why was your master ungrateful to Mahasena for all the kindness shown to him?

Yaugandharayana: Oh, don't speak in that strain.

Nalagiri will only Vatsa obey,
Control over him none else claims or pretends;
He ran amok, and the panic to allay,
And to save the life of himself and his friends
Your master liberated mine, we all know,
So, your claims to our gratitude are hollow. (18)

Bharatarohaka: If he was only released for capturing Nalagiri, as you claim, why was your master not imprisoned afterwards?

Yaugandharayana: Because your master was afraid of being charged with ingratitude.

Bharatarohaka: It is said, sir, that you are deeply learned in the science of politics. What does it prescribe for enemies defeated and captured in battle?

Yaugandharayana: Death.

Bharatarohaka: If, then, Vatsaraja deserved death, why did we not kill him, and why did we treat him well?

Yaugandharayana: You treated him well because you wanted him to treat your king well, and not to carry him off.

Bharatarohaka: Your master thought that even this was possible?

Yaugandharayana: What doubt is there?

Your king was in the hollow of his hand,
But my king, ever virtuous, spared him.
He rides the lord of elephants off-hand,
And can make standards fall when it suits him.

Bharatarohaka: Very well. But when planning all these hostile acts against Mahasena, did you think for a moment what would become of Kausambi?

Yaugandharayana: Oh, what a ridiculous question!

He has escaped from under your very nose,
Why should I worry about things hereafter?
When the tree has been cut at its root and source,
The branches cannot be any great matter. (20)

(Enter the chamberlain)

Chamberlain: (whispers to Bharatarohaka) That's how it is.

Bharatarohaka: Say it aloud.

Chamberlain:

"You've done no real wrong, though you used many wiles
We like your qualities, though victims of your guiles,
So, forget these events, and accept this chalice,
As guest's present, from us who bear you no malice". (21)

That's Mahasena's message.

Yaugandharayana: Ah, me!

The houses I set fire to are still burning,
So must be all the Ujjain minister's hearts.
This honour shown to one well worth punishing
Resembles lingering death with poison darts. (22)

(Lamentations are heard from behind the scenes)

Bharatarohaka: Ah!

What is this sudden cry of sorrow
Coming from the palace top storey,
Like that of the wee little sparrow
Struck by the cruel falcon gory? (23)

Go and find out what it is.

Chamberlain: As you order, sir. (goes and comes back) Queen Angaravati, overcome with grief, wanted to commit suicide by falling down from the top story of the palace. But Mahasena said to her "Your daughter's mar-

riage has been performed according the laws of Kshatriyas. Why do you grieve at this time of joy? Let us celebrate the marriage ceremony of Vasavadatta and Vatsaraja, in effigy, with their paintings. So,

All of a sudden, women are now performing
The marriage rites in disorder in their delight,
The things used for luck, with their tears, they are wetting,
Tears shed by them in joy reaching its very height. (24)

Yaugandharayana: So, Mahasena, too, has accepted it as an alliance by marriage. Come, give me the chalice now.

Chamberlain: Pray, accept it (gives it).

Bharatarohaka: What more should Mahasena do for you, sir?

Yaugandharayana: I desire nothing more than that Mahasena should always be pleased with me.

Epilogue.

May cows ev'rywhere be happy,
May our lion-like king beat his foes!
And subduing their sovereignty
Rule the whole earth freed from all woes!

(End of Act IV)

End of "Yaugandharayana's Vows."

SVAPNA VASAVADATTA

OR

THE VISION OF VASAVADATTA

CHARACTERS.

Men.

Udayana: King of Vatsa.

Yaugandharayana: His chief minister, appearing also in the disguise of a hermit.

The Jester: Vasantaka, the confidant of Udayana.

A Student of Theology.

Badrayana: The chamberlain of King Pradyota Mahasena of Ujjain.

The chamberlain of Magadha.

The chamberlain of the King of Vatsa.

Two guards, one of whom is called Sambhashaka.

Women.

Vasavadatta: Princess of Ujjain, daughter of King Pradyota Mahasena, supposed to have been burnt alive at Lavanaka, and brought to Rajagriha, and made to live in the Magadhan palace under the name "Avantika".

Padmavati: Sister of Darsaka, King of Magadha, and second queen of Udayana.

A Hermit Woman.

Padminika and Madhukarika. Maids of honour attending on Padmavati.

Vijaya: Female door-keeper at the Kausambi Palace.

Vasundhara: Nurse of Vasavadatta.

Nurse of Padmavati.

Maids, Attendants, etc.

Important characters referred to, but not appearing, in the play.

Men:—

Darsaka: King of Magadha.

Mahasena: King of Avanti.

Aruni: Usurper of Vatsa.

Women:—

Queen mother of Magadha.

Queen of Magadha.

Angaravati: Mahasena's queen.

Prelude.

(AT THE END OF THE OPENING, ENTER THE STAGE DIRECTER).

Stage Director:

May Lord Balarama[1] protect thee, king of men,[2]
With his arms of the colour of the rising Moon[3]
Vigorous with wine,[4] incarnate beauty past ken,
Thrilled with the joy of this Spring filled with ev'ry
boon![5] (1)

I have the honour to announce to the assembled gentlemen here as follows:—Hey, what now? Even as I was about to make the announcement, I seem to hear a noise. Well, let me find out what it is.

(Behind the scenes)

Make way, sirs, make way, sirs, make way!

Stage Director: Ah, now I understand:—

Zealous servants of Magadha's[6] king
Escort their princess, and turn away
Without a second thought those walking
Ev'n on this sequestered hermits' way. (2)

(Exit)

(Prelude ends here)

ACT I.

(A FOREST ROAD NEAR A HERMITAGE.)

(Enter two guards).

Guards: Make way, sirs, make way!

(Enter Yaugandharayana in the disguise of a wandering religious mendicant, and Vasavadatta disguised as Avantika).[7]

Yaugandharayana: (listens) What? Even here people are driven aside!

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1 Elder brother of Sri Krishna. At one time, he was widely worshipped. Now his temples are few. There is one in South Travancore.

2 Evidently, addressed to the king who is present at the theatre.

3 He is ruddy-white: Krishna, of course, is black.

4 He is fond of wine.

5 By paronomasia, the dramatist very cleverly introduces the names of Udayana, Vasavadatta, Padmavati, and Vasantaka, the principal persons in the play, by putting in words applicable to the gods and these.

6 Modern Behar.

7 "Lady of Avanti". Here, she is shown as a Brahman middle class woman.

Clad in barks and eating forest fruits,
Reverend sages come here and dwell,
Who is this fellow, the worst of brutes,
Made insolent by chance fortune's swell,
Who molests these venerable folk,
By imposing here the layman's yoke,
And makes this great penance grove tranquil
A city street by his orders shrill? (3)

Vasavadatta: Sir, who is this that turns us away from the path?

Yaugandharayana: Lady, one who, by doing so, turns himself away from the path of Righteousness.

Vasavadatta: Sir, I did not mean that. Can I be ordered to make way?

Yaugandharayana: Lady, even gods, when not recognized, are insulted thus.

Vasavadatta: Sir, the fatigue of the journey has not caused me as much pain as this humiliation.

Yaugandharayana: My lady, these things have been enjoyed and discarded by you. You shouldn't bother about these. For,

Once you too had your heart's fill of these pomps and shows:
When your lord's victorious, you'll have them all again:
The wheel of fortune turns with Time, like th' arrayed rows
Of the spokes of a cart wheel running through a lane. (4)

The two guards: Make way, sirs, make way!

(Enter the chamberlain)

Chamberlain: (to one of the guards) Verily, verily, Sambhashaka, you should not ask people here to make way. Look you,

Bring not to shame the name of our lord the king,
By harsh usage of folk in this hermitage,
It's to be free from all such city hustling
That great souls come here, to a forest cottage. (5)

The two guards: All right, sir. (Retire).

Yaugandharayana: Ah, he has got good discernment. My child, let us approach him.

Vasavadatta: As you please, sir.

Yaugandharayana: (approaching the chamberlain) Sir, why are people being turned away?

Chamberlain: Oh, good hermit!

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) "Hermit" is an honourable form of address, no doubt, but, being unfamiliar to me, it does not appeal to me so much.

Chamberlain: Listen, sir. This lady here is the sister of our great king who has been named Darsaka by the elders. She has been on a visit to the Queen-Mother, Mahadevi, who has made a hermitage her home. Having taken leave of her, she is on her way back to Rajagriha.[8] To-day, she is pleased to stay in this hermitage. But,

Go ye freely into the forest and bring
Holy water, faggots, flowers and grasses:
Nothing pleases this fair daughter of your king
More than piety of the hermit classes:
She obeys the law, like all her royal race,
And against all breaches thereof sets her face. (6)

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) So, this is Padmavati, the Princess of Magadha, about whom the astrologers, Pushpaka, Bhadraka, and others have predicted that she will wed my royal master. See,

We esteem or hate as our desires dictate;
I want her to wed my king and save the State;
So I feel for her a great devotion,
As I see her free Vasta from commotion. (7)

Vasavadatta: (to herself) After hearing that she is the daughter of a King, I feel for her almost a sisterly affection.

(Enter Padmavati with her retinue and a maid)

Maid: This way, princess, this way. Here is the hermitage. Be pleased to enter.

(A woman hermit is found seated at the entrance)

Woman Hermit: Princess you are most welcome.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) So, this is the Princess. Her looks proclaim her noble birth.

Padmavati: (to woman hermit) Reverend lady, I salute you.

Woman Hermit: Long life to thee! Come in, child, come in. A hermitage is, indeed, like one's own home to wayfarers.

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8 Ancient capital of Magadha: Modern Rajgir.

Padmavati: So it is, your reverence. I feel quite at home and am grateful to you for these words of affectionate welcome.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) She is not merely charming in appearance; her words are equally sweet.

Woman Hermit: (to the maid) My dear, has no king yet applied for the hand of this sister of our gracious king?

Maid: King Pradyota of Ujjain has sent ambassadors to ask for her hand for his son.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Well, well, she has now become one of my own people![9]

Woman Hermit: She well deserves this honour, by her beauty. We have heard that both are very exalted royal families.

Padmavati: (to chamberlain) Sir, have you found any hermits that will favour us by accepting our gifts? Invite all the hermits here, for giving them according to their hearts' desire, and ask them "Does anybody want anything"?

Chamberlain: As you wish, lady. (calls out) Oh, ascetics inhabiting this sacred grove, kindly listen to my words. Her Highness, the Princess of Magadha, is gratified by your affectionate welcome, and invites all of you to come here and accept her gifts so that she may discharge her religious duty and gain merit.

Is there one who wants a pitcher?
Come here those who seek a garment!
Those who have had investiture,
Freely ask for teacher's present!
Here's the friend of all the pious,
The princess, only too anxious
For you to speak out your demands
To issue to me her commands.
What can she give now to please you,
And to whom, kindly bethink you.
She'll deem it a special favour.
If she can lighten your labour. (8)

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) Ah, I see my opportunity. (Aloud) Sir, I want a favour.

Padmavati: I am happy that my visit to this hermitage has borne fruit.

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[9] As she is expected to wed her brother.

Hermit Woman: (to herself) Every ascetic in this hermitage is contented, and wants nothing. This must be some stranger.

Chamberlain: What can we do for you, sir?

Yaugandharayana: (pointing to Vasavadatta) This is my sister. Her husband has gone abroad. It will be a great favour to me if Her Highness will take care of her for some time. For,

I seek not riches, raiments, pleasure,
I turned not hermit for a living;
This royal maid's wise beyond measure,
With her I can have no misgiving:
She knows well the straight path of duty,
Let her guard my sister, a beauty. (9)

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Hm! The noble Yaugandharayana desires to leave me here. Let it be. He will never do anything without thinking it over well.

Chamberlain: Lady, his expectation soars high indeed. How can we consent? For,

Easy it is to part with treasure,
Or life itself, or hard-earned penance,
Easy is aught else in like measure,
But watching a ward with vigilance! (10)

Padmavati: Having first proclaimed "Does anybody want anything?", it is improper now to hestitate. Pray do as he wants, sir.

Chamberlain: These words are worthy of your Highness.

Maid: Long live the princess who thus keeps her word!

Woman Hermit: Long life to thee, my dear!

Chamberlain: All right, my lady. (Approaches Yaugandharayana). Sir, Her Highness accepts the guardianship of your honour's sister.

Yaugandharayana: I am highly indebted to her Highness. (to Vasavadatta) Approach Her Highness, child.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) What is to be done? I shall go, unlucky that I am!

Padmavati: Well, she has now become ours.

Woman Hermit: Judging by her looks, she too seems to me to be a princess.

Maid: You are right, reverend lady. I too think that she has seen far better days.

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) Ah, half my task is finished. It has come off just as I planned with the other minis-

ters And when my lord is reinstated on his throne, and Vasavadatta is restored to him, the Princess of Magadha will bear witness to her good conduct, and be my surety for it. For,

The seers who foretold our king's eclipse
Said he would wed Padmavati too,
I've acted on these words from their lips,
Sure that Fate would ne'r make them untrue. (17)

(Enter a student of theology)

Student: (looking upward). It is midday, and I am dead tired. Where shall I rest? (walks round). Ah, this must be a hermitage. For,

Unperturbed and serene the fawns graze here,
Sure of their ground, and with no trace of fear:
The trees are all nurtured with love and care,
Their branches groan with fruits and flowers rare;
Here are those famous herds of tawny kine;
And no trace of the plough till the sky-line;
From here and there are rising high smokes mauve,
I am sure this must be a hermits' grove. (12)

I'll enter. (He enters, and sees The chamberlain). Hullo, this man here does not fit in with a hermitage. (looks in another direction) But there are hermits also. So, there is no harm in proceeding further. Oh, but the women-folk!

Chamberlain: Come in freely, sir. A hermitage is common to one and all.

Vasavadatta: Humph!

Padmavati: (to herself) Ah, this lady avoids the sight of strangers. Well, it will not be difficult to look after my charge.

Chamberlain: Sir, we were here before you. Pray, accept from us the hospitality due to a guest. (gives some water).

Student: (after a ceremonial sip of water) Enough, enough. My weariness has gone.

Yaugandharayana: Sir, where are you coming from? Whither are you going? Which is your native place?

Student: Listen, sir. I am a native of Rajagriha. To specialise in Vedic studies, I was residing in the village of Lavanaka in the land of Vatsa.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Lavanaka! The very name Lavanaka revives my old agony.

Yaugandharayana: And have you finished your course of studies?

Student: No, not yet.

Yaugandharayana: If you have not finished your studies, why have you returned?

Student: A terrible calamity occurred there.

Yaugandharayana: What was that?

Student: There was a king there named Udayana.

Yaugandharayana: We have heard of him. What about him?

Student: He loved his queen, the daughter of Avanti's king, passionately.

Yaugandharayana: Very possible. Go on!

Student: Then, when the king was away hunting, the village caught fire, and she perished in the flames.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) It's a lie, it's a lie! Alas, I am still alive, unlucky I!

Yaugandharayana: Go on!

Student: Then, a minister named Yaugandharayana jumped into that fire with intent to rescue her, and perished.

Yaugandharayana: Did he really? And then?

Student: The king, on his return, heard the news of the death of both these, and was so grieved at parting from them both, that he sought to jump into that same fire and commit suicide, and it was a job for his ministers to hold him back.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Yes. I know my lord's great love for me.

Yaugandharayana: And then?

Student: The king hugged to his bosom the charred remains of the ornaments which had adorned her body, and fell down unconscious.

All: Alas!

Vasavadatta: (to herself) The noble Yaugandharayana is now satisfied, I hope., (weeps).

Maid: (to Padmavati) Princess, this lady is in tears.

Padmavati: She must have a very tender heart.

Yaugandharayana: Quite so, quite so. My sister is tender-hearted by nature. Then?

Student: Then, by degrees, he regained consciousness.

Padmavati: (to herself) Thank God, he lives. There was a void in my heart when I heard that he fell in a swoon.

Yaugandharayana: Then?

Student: Then, the king suddenly got up, with his body red with dust by rolling on the ground in grief, and burst into lamentation after lamentation, calling out, in agony, "Oh Vasavadatta, oh daughter of Avanti's king, oh my heart's beloved, oh darling pupil!" In short,

No chakravaka bird grieved like him for its mate held dear,
Nor have any others from their fairy lovers parted;
Blessed is a woman loved with affection so sincere,
She lives in her lord's love for e'r though burnt and departed. (13)

Yaugandharayana: But, tell me, sir, did not some minister seek to console him?

Student: Yes, there was a minister, Rumanvan, who tried his utmost to console the king. Oh,

Like the king, he too takes no food,
Tears have made both his cheeks hollow!
Serving the king in ev'ry mood
Night and day, he's full of sorrow.
He cares not for his clothes or looks,
Any more than the ugly rooks;
Should the king, by any chance, die,
He will follow without a sigh. (14)

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Happily, my lord is in good hands.

Yaugandharayana: (to himself) Oh, what a burden does Rumanvan carry! For,

My burden allows me some rest,
He is always by his oppressed,
For ev'rything depends on him
Whom the king leans on in his whim. (15)

(aloud) And, sir, has the king been now consoled?

Student: That I do not know. The ministers left the village taking with them, with very great difficulty, the king who was raving in grief "Here I laughed with her; here I chatted with her; here I sat with her; here we had a love quarrel; here I passed the night with her; here I lay by her side" and so on and so forth. With the departure of the king, the village became desolate, like the sky when the moon and the stars have set, and I too came away.

Woman Hermit: Verily, he must be a noble and virtuous king, since even this stranger praises him so.

Maid: Princess, I wonder whether he will marry another.

Padmavati: (to herself) That is just what my own heart is querying.

Student: (to the chamberlain and Yaugandharayana) Now I woud fain depart. Pray, give me leave.

Both: Go, then, sir, and may you fare well!

Student: Thank you. (Exit).

Yaugandharayana: Well, I should also like to depart, with Her Highness's leave.

Chamberlain: He wants Your Highness's leave to depart.

Padmavati: Your sister will grieve at the separation from you, sir.

Yaugandharayana: Being entrusted to the care of good persons, she will not grieve. (looks at the Chamberlain). Now, let me go.

Chamberlain: Go, then, sir. Hope we shall meet again.

Yaugandharayana: I hope so too, (Exit Yaugandharayana)

Chamberlain: Lady, it is now time to retire.

Padmavati: (to Woman Hermit) Reverend lady, I salute you.

Woman Hermit: My child, may you soon get a husband worthy of you!

Vasavadatta: Reverned lady, I too salute you.

Woman Hermit: May you be united with your husband soon!

Vasavadatta: I thank you.

Chamberlain: Come along then. This way, this way, my lady. For now,

The birds have all to their nests retired,
The hermits lave in ponds their limbs tired;
The fires are lighted and blaze away,
The smoke all through the grove makes its way.
The sun has from his height descended
With his piercing rays, the reins, drawn in,
He has stopped his car and alighted
On the peak of the western mountain. (16)

(Exeunt Omnes)

(*End of Act I.*)

ACT II.

INTERLUDE.

(*Enter a Maid*).

Maid: Kunjarika, Kunjarika![1] Where, oh where, is the Princess Padmavati? What do you say? "The princess is playing with a ball near the jasmine bower"?[2] All right, then, I shall go to her. (walks about and looks around her). Ah, here comes the princess herself playing with a ball. Her ear-pendants are swaying in the wind. Her face, rendered doubly beautiful by the exertion, is strewn with beads of perspiration caused by the exercise. I'll go to her.

(Exit)

(Here ends the Interlude).

(Enter Padmavati playing with a ball, and followed by her retinue and Vasavadatta).

Vasavadatta: (Picking up and giving the ball to Padmavati) Here is your ball, my dear.

Padmavati: That's enough for the present, madam.

Vasavadatta: You have played too long with the ball, my dear. Your hands are so red that they look as if they belong to some other person.[3]

Maid: Play on, princess, play on. Make the most of this charming period of maidenhood.

Padmavati: (to Vasavadatta) What are you thinking about, dear lady? I think you are laughing at me. Do I look ridiculous?

Vasavadatta: Not at all, my dear. To-day, you are looking more beautiful than ever. I am looking at your handsome face from every side.

Padmavati: Go to! Don't make fun of me!

Vasavadatta: I shall be mute, oh daughter-in-law-elect of Mahasena!

Padmavati: And who may this Mahasena be?

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[1] Another maid, not on the stage.

[2] Here, Kunjarika's voice off the stage.

[3] Because the colour has become so different from the rest of Padmavati's body. The implied suggestion is that the hands look as if dyed with henna juice, like a bride's.

Vasavadatta: There is a King of Ujjain called Pradyota. Owing to the vast size of his army, he is called Mahasena.

Maid: The princess is not desirous of any alliance with that monarch.

Vasavadatta: Then, with whom does she desire an alliance?

Maid: There is a king of Vatsa called Udayana. The princess is enamoured of his virtues.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) She desires to wed my husband! (Aloud) Why?

Maid: Because he is so understanding and tender-hearted. That's why.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) I know; I too was captivated by that quality of his.

Maid: (to the princess) But princess, suppose that king should prove to be ugly?

Vasavadatta: No, no, he is very handsome.

Padmavati: How do you know that, dear lady?

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Partiality for my lord has made me transgress the bounds of propriety. What shall I do now? Ah, I have it. (aloud) That's what everybody says in Ujjaini, my dear.

Padmavati: Quite so. It would not be difficult for the people of Ujjaini to see him. And beauty, I suppose, captivates the hearts of all.

(Enter Nurse of Padmavati)

Nurse: Victory to the princess! Princess, thou art betrothed!

Vasavadatta: To whom, madam?

Nurse: To Udayana, King of Vatsa.

Vasavadatta: Is that king in good health?

Nurse: Oh, yes; he arrived here quite well, and has accepted the hand of our princess.

Vasavadatta: What an improper thing!

Padmavati: Why, what is the impropriety?

Vasavadatta: Oh, nothing much. I was only thinking of his grieving for his queen in that manner then, and his indifference to her now.

Nurse: Madam, great minds, like his, are ruled by the sacred scriptures, and are, therefore, consoled easily.

Vasavadatta: Good lady, tell me, did he himself seek the princess's hand?

Nurse: Oh, no. When he came here, on some other business, our king, seeing in him a combination of noble birth, learning, youth and beauty, himself offered him her hand.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Ah, then, my lord is not to blame.

(Enter another Maid.)

Maid: Princess, make haste, make haste . The queen says "To-day, the conjunction of the stars is auspicious, and we must have the bridal knot tied this very day."

Vasavadatta: (to herself) The more they hasten, the thicker becomes the darkness in my heart.

Nurse: Come, princess, come.

(Exeunt Omens)

(*End of Act II.*)

ACT III.

(The palace gardens at Rajagriha).

(*Enter Vasavadatta deep in thought*).

Vasavadatta: (to herself) I have left Padmavati in the ladies' court, with its festive wedding crowd of women, and have managed to come alone to this pleasure garden in order to get rid of the sorrow which Fate has brought on me. (walks about) Oh, what an outrage! Even my husband has become another's! Let me sit down. (sits down). Blessed is the female *chakravaka* bird! Separated from her mate, she does not live. But I do not die. Miserable that I am, I go on living in the hope of seeing my lord again.

(Enter a Maid carrying flowers)

Maid: Where could lady Avantika have gone? (walks about and looks round her). Ah, there she is, seated on the stone bench under the *priyangu* creeper. Dressed in that plain, but graceful, garment, she sits plunged in deep meditation, looking like the crescent moon obscured by the mist. I'll go to her (approaches her). Lady Avantika, I have been looking for you for a long time.

Vasavadatta: What for?

Maid: The Queen says "The lady comes from a noble family. She is skilled, and loving. Let her, therefore, make the wedding garland."

Vasavadatta: And for whom am I to make it?

Maid: Four our princess.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Ah me, this too has fallen to my lot. Verily, the gods are pitiless.

Maid: Lady, let not anything else occupy your thoughts now.

The bridegroom is already having his bath in the mosaic room. So, please make the garland quickly.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) I cannot think of anything else. (aloud) Have you seen the bridegroom, my dear?

Maid: Oh yes. My affection for the princess and my own curiosity, led me to do so.

Vasavadatta: And what is he like?

Maid: Madam, I tell you, I have never seen his like before.

Vasavadatta: Tell me, tell me, my dear, is he handsome?

Maid: He is the god of love himself, without the bow and arrows.

Vasavadatta: Thanks, that will do.

Maid: Why do you stop me?

Vasavadatta: It is improper to listen to any one singing the praises of another woman's husband.

Maid: Then, please hurry on with the wreath, madam.

Vasavadatta: I shall do it at once. Give those leaves and flowers to me.

Maid: Here they are. Please take them. (hands them over)

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Here am I, making the wreath, unlucky I! (turns out the basket, and examines the flowers and leaves, and then asks about a leaf) What is this leaf?

Maid: It is called "Widowhood-preventer".

Vasavadatta: (to herself) This I shall use in plenty, both for my own sake, as well as Padmavati's (aloud) And this?

Maid: It is called "Rival-exterminator."

Vasavadatta: This must not be used.

Maid: Why?

Vasavadatta: His wife is dead, and there is no rival to exterminate. So, it is useless.

Another maid: (entering) Make haste, lady, make haste. The bridegroom is being conducted to the ladies' court by the married women.

Vasavadatta: It is ready. Take it (gives the garland).

First Maid: Thanks. I must be off, madam. (both the maids go).

Vasavadatta: She is gone. Oh, what an outrage! Even my husband now belongs to another woman! Ah, I'll go to bed. Sleep may allay my pain, if I get it (Exit)

(*End of Act III*.)

ACT IV.

INTERLUDE.

(*Palace at Rajagriha*.)

(Enter the Jester.)

Jester: (In glee) Ha! Ha; How delighted I am to be present on this joyous occasion of the marriage of my master, the king of Vatsa! Who could have dreamt that, after being submerged in such a whirlpool of misfortune, we should come to the surface again like this? Now we live once more in palaces, bathe in the tanks of the inner court, and eat dainty and delicious dishes. It is almost as if I am living in Paradise, except that there are no celestial nymphs here to keep me company. There is just one great drawback. I cannot digest my food at all. I get no sleep even on the downiest beds. I feel gout hovering all over my body. Oh, there is no happiness in life without good health and fine food!

(Enter a Maid.)

Maid: Where could the noble Vasantaka have gone? (looks round). Ah, here he is! (approaches him). Noble Vasantaka, I have been looking for you for a long time.

Jester: (Looking at her) And why were you looking for me, my dear?

Maid: The Queen wants to know whether the son-in-law has finished his bath.

Jester: Why does she want to know that?

Maid: So that I may take flowers and unguents to him, of course.

Jester: His Majesty has bathed. You may bring anything except foodstuffs.

Maid: Why do you except foodstuffs?

Jester: Because, unlucky that I am, my belly is rolling like a cuckoo's eyes.

Maid: May you ever be like that!

Jester: Off with you! I shall go and join His Majesty.

(*Exeunt.*)

(End of Interlude.)

(Palace garden.)

(Enter Padmavati, accompanied by her retinue, and Vasavadatta disguised as Avantika).

Maid: What has brought the princess to the pleasure garden?

Padmavati: My dear, I came to see whether the *sephalika* bushes are in blossom.

Maid: They are in blossom, princess. They are laden with flowers that look like pendants of pearls interspersed with coral.

Padmavati: If that is so, my dear, why do you delay?

Maid: Let the princess sit down for a while on this stone bench, while I go and gather the flowers.

Padmavati: (to Vasavadatta) Shall we sit here, madam?

Vasavadatta: Yes. (Both sit down on a stone bench).

Maid: (having collected some flowers). See, princess, see. My hands are full of *sephalika* blossoms with their half-stockings of the colour of red arsenic.

Padmavati: (observing them) See lady, what brilliant colours these flowers have!

Vasavadatta: Yes, what lovely flowers!

Maid: Princess, shall I pick some more?

Princess: No, my dear, no more.

Vasavadatta: Why do you stop her, my dear?

Padmavati: Because, I shall be honoured when my noble lord comes here and sees this wealth of flowers.

Vasavadatta: Do you love him very much, my dear?

Padmavati: I don't know, lady, but when he is not by my side, I feel ever so lonely.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) How hard is my lot, seeing that even she speaks thus.

Maid: How finely the princess has said "I love my husband"!

Padmavati: I have got a doubt.

Vasavadatta: What is it?

Padmavati: Whether my noble lord meant as much to Vasavadatta as to me.

Vasavadatta: Aye, even more!

Padmavati: How do you know?

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Ah, partiality for my noble lord has made me once again overstep the bounds of propriety. I know what to say (aloud). Had her love for him been less, she would not have foresaken her own people and eloped with him.

Padmavati: You are right.

Maid: Princess, gently suggest to your husband that you too would like to learn to play on the lute![1]

Padmavati: I did speak to him about it.

Vasavadatta: And what did he say?

Padmavati: He said nothing. He heaved a deep sigh, and remained silent.

Vasavadatta: What do you gather from that?

Padmavati: I gather that he remembered the noble Vasavadatta and her virtues. Only out of courtesy for me, he restrained his tears in my presence.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Blessed am I if that is true!

(Enter the King and Jester.)

Jester: Ha! Ha! How lovely this pleasure garden looks with a thin sprinkling of the *bandhujiva* flowers fallen in the course of plucking! This way, my lord.

King: Here I come, my dear Vasantaka, here I come.

Once, as you know, I went to Ujjaini and saw
Unimpeded the daughter of Avanti's king;
The god of love that moment shot all five arrows
At me at once, and I felt love, sweet and fierce, gnaw
At my heart, with intense pain, and in my ears ring.
Wherefrom this sixth arrow to add to my sorrows? (1)

Jester: Where has Lady Padmavati gone? Has she gone to the arbour of creepers, or to the stone-bench called

[1] This is to make him love her like Vasavadatta, his former pupil.

the "Crest of the Hill", which is so strewn with *asana* blossoms that it has the appearance of being covered with a tiger's skin? Or could she have entered the wood of the seven-leaved-trees with their powerful and pungent scent? Or has she gone to the wooden pavilion adorned with paintings of birds and beasts on its walls? (He gazes upwards). Ha! Ha! Your Majesty! Do you see that line of cranes flying with speed across the spotless autumn sky, looking as beautiful as the long white arms of the adored Baladeva?[2]

King: Friend, I see them. Oh, how wonderful!
Now the line is straight, now it's broken,
Now the flight is upward, not it's low,
This line of birds divides the welkin
In two, like boundary marks we know.
The sky is spotless like the belly
Of a serpent casting off its slough;
When the birds turn and wheel round, we see
Them twisted like the Great Bear itself. (2)

Maid: Look, princess, look at this flock of cranes, advancing steadily in line, white and lovely, like a garland of water-lilies. Oh, the king!

Padmavati: Ah, it's my noble lord! (to Vasavadatta). Lady, for your sake, I shall avoid meeting my lord. So, let us enter the jasmine bower.

Vasavadatta: All right. (the three leave the stone-bench and enter the jasmine bower).

Jester: The princess Padmavati must have come here and gone away.

King: How do you know that?

Jester: Look at these *sephalika* bushes from which the flowers have been plucked.

King: (feels the stone-bench). Yes, you are right.
This bench retains still the warmth of people sitting,
The flowers below also show signs of treading:
So, some one has sat here just now, I am quite sure,
And hurried away, on seeing me, so demure. (2-a)
Oh, Vasantaka, what brilliant colours these flowers have!

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[2] Same as Balarama.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) That name 'Vasantaka' makes me feel as if I were at Ujjaini again.

King: Vasantaka, let us sit down on this stone bench, and wait for Padmavati.

Jester: All right (sits down on the bench, and rises again) Ho! Ho! The heat of this scorching autumn sun is unbearable. Let us enter that jasmine bower.

King: Very well. Lead the way.

Jester: All right. (Both walk round).

Padmavati: The noble Vasantaka is about to spoil everything. What shall we do now?

Maid: Princess, shall I keep the king away by shaking this hanging creeper and making the myriad bees, lurking there, to fly about?

Padmavati: Yes. Do. (The maid does so, and the bees rush towards the jester in swarms).

Jester: Help! Help! Keep back, Your Majesty, keep back!

King: What is the matter?

Jester: I am attacked by these bastard bees.

King: Nay, don't say so. One should never frighten the bees.

Let not our foot-steps tread or harass
The melodiously humming bees;
Drunk with honey, they fondly caress
Their love-stricken mates, and their cares cease;
Part them not from their sweethearts tender,
They too are pained when torn asunder. (3)

Let us, therefore, sit on this stone bench alone.

Jester: All right. (Both sit down on the bench).

Maid: Princess, we are now prisoners here.

Padmavati: Happily, it is my noble lord who sits there.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) I am glad to see my noble lord in such good health.

Maid: Princess, look! This lady's eyes are filled with tears!

Vasavadatta: The pollen of the *kasa* flowers, set flying by the wanton bees, has fallen into my eyes, and made them water.

Padmavati: Quite so.

Jester: Well, now, the pleasure garden is deserted. I want to ask Your Majesty something. May I?

King: Yes, if you like.

Jester: Whom do you love more, Queen Vasavadatta of yore, or Queen Padmavati of to-day?

King: Now, why do you want to put me in a most awkward predicament?

Padmavati: Oh dear, what an awkward predicament for my noble lord!

Vasavadatta: (to herself) And for me too, unlucky that I am!

Jester: Tell me without reserve. One is dead, another is nowhere near.

King: No, my friend, no. I shall not tell you. You are a chatterbox.

Padmavati: By saying that much, my noble lord has said enough.

Jester: I swear to you that I shall never tell a soul. See, I bite my tongue.[3]

King: No, my friend, I dare not speak.

Padmavati: How stupidly importunate he is! Even after that, he cannot read his heart.

Jester: What, you won't tell me? Well, if you don't, you shall not stir a step from the stone bench! I shall hold Your Majesty prisoner.

King: What! By force ?

Jetser: Yes, by force.

King: Well, then, we shall see.

Jester: Forgive me for my impudence. I conjure you to tell me the truth, in the name of our friendship.

King: What to do now? I am helpless. Listen:—

Her beauty, virtue, sweetness, make me
Hold Padmavati in high regard,

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[3] That is, I seal my lips.

But Vasavadatta holds the key.
Of my heart, both vanguard and rear-guard! (4)
She grieved when I grieved, rejoiced when I rejoiced;
She was glad when I was praised, and sad when blamed;
When I had keen anguish of heart, though unvoiced;
Lo, I found her grieving for the pang unnamed!
When I was angry, she spoke sweet words soothing,
She knew to do all things to the times suiting;
She was to me a wife, a friend, a servant,
And a minister great and all-observant. (4-a)

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Well, well, I am now amply recompensed for all my suffering. Even this disguise has many merits.

Maid: Princess, really, my lord lacks all courtesy.

Padmavati: Not at all, my dear. My lord has shown great courtesy in remembering even now all the merits of the noble Vasavadatta.

Vasavadatta: My dear, your words are worthy of your exalted birth.

King: Well, I have told you. Now, it is your turn to tell me whom you like better, Vasavadatta of yore, or Padmavati of to-day.

Padmavati: Now, my noble lord is acting as Vasantaka did.

Jester: What is the use of my worthless opinion? I hold both the queens in very high esteem.

King: Idiot, you compelled me to speak, and now, you refuse to give out your opinion.

Jester: What, will you compel me too?

King: Yes, of course.

Jester: All right. Then, you will never hear it.

King: Forgive me, oh mighty Brahman. Speak of your own free will.

Jester: Then, listen. I held Queen Vasavadatta in very high regard. Queen Padmavati is young, beautiful gentle, free from conceit and anger, and very courteous. But there is one other great virtue. Vasavadatta used to come with delicious dishes, saying, "Now, where can the noble Vasantaka have gone?"

Vasavadttta: (to herself) Bravo, Vasantaka! You must remind me of this.

King: Very well, Vasantaka, I shall tell Queen Vasavadatta all this.

Jester: Alas! Vasavadatta! Where is Vasavadatta? She died long ago!

King: (sadly) So it is. Vasavadatta is no more!

That jest of yours made my mind wander,
To those days of yore when life was dear;
My lips were by force torn asunder,
By old habit formed when she was near. (5)

Padmavati: It was a delightful conversation. It has been cut short by this wretched fellow.

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Well, well, I am consoled now. Ah, how sweet it is to hear these words unobserved!

Jester: Courage, my king, courage! Who can gainsay Fate? It has happened so, and that is all that can be said about it.

King: Friend, you do not understand my condition. For,

Can one forget a love which shook the heart?
Fond memory brings it back with a start;
Our sad and mortgaged minds get free, one fears,
But by paying in full the debt of tears. (6)

Jester: (to himself) His Majesty's face is wet with tears. I shall get some water for washing it. (Exit).

Padmavati: (to Vasavadatta) Madam, my noble lord's face is hidden in a veil of tears. Let us slip away now.

Vasavadatta: Yes, let us go. No, you stay here. It will not be right on your part to go away, leaving your husband in such a sad mood. I will go alone.

Maid: The lady is right. You should go to him, Princess.

Padmavati: What do you say? Shall I go?

Vasavadatta: Yes, my dear, do. (Exit Vasavadatta towards the palace. Padmavati goes towards the King).

Jester: (enters with water in a lotus leaf). Here is Lady Padmavati!

Padmavati: Vasantaka, what is this?

Jester: This is that; that is this.

Padmavati: Speak out, sir, speak out,

Jester: My lady, the pollen of the *kasa* flowers, wafted by the wind, got into the king's eyes and his face is bathed in tears. So, please take this water to him for washing his face.

Padmavati: (to herself) Ah, the chivalrous master has a chivalrous servant! (takes the water from him and approaches the king). Victory to my noble lord! Here is water for washing your face!

King: Eh, what, Padmavati? (aside) Vasantaka, what is this?

Jester: It is like this (whispers in his ear).

King: Good, Vasantaka, good. (sips water) Padmavati, be seated.

Padmavati: As my noble lord commands (sits down).

King: (to Padmavati).

Fair one, the pollen of these *kasa* flowers,
White as the autumn moon, was, by the wind, blown
Into my eyes, and is the cause of these tears
Which have bathed my face, as you yourself have known. (7)

(to himself)

The heart of woman is full of fear
Of losing what it holds very dear;
This young girl, though brave, is newly-wed,
If she learns the truth, her heart is bled. (8)

Jester: His Majesty, the King of Magadha, is giving a reception this afternoon to all his friends, in honour of you. Courtesy reciprocating courtesy engenders affection. So, it is time for Your Majesty to make a move.

King: Yes, indeed. Good that it occurred to you now. (rises)—

It's easy enough in the world to find
Men with noble virtue and courtesy,
But, it's not so easy to see the mind
Which values all those qualities duly. (9)

(Exeunt Omnes).

(*End of Act IV.*)

ACT V.

(RAJAGRIHA. KING DARSAKA'S PALACE.)

Interlude.

(Enter Padminika).

Padminika: Madhukarika, Madhukarika, come here quick!

Madhukarika: (Entering) Here I am, my dear, what do you want me to do?

Padminika: Don't you know, my dear, that Princess Padmavati is suffering from a severe headache?

Madhukarika: Alas!

Padminika: Go quickly, and call Lady Avantika. Simply tell her that the princess has a headache, and she will come of her own accord.

Madhukarika: But, what can she do, my dear?

Padminika: Why, she will relieve the pain by telling the princess amusing stories.

Madhukarika: That is a good idea. Where has the bed of the princess been arranged?

Padminika: In the Ocean Pavilion![1] You go now. I shall look for the noble Vasantaka, to ask him to inform his master.

Madhukarika: All right (Exit)

Padminika: Now, where shall I find the noble Vasantaka?

(Enter the Jester).

Jester: (to himself) The heart of the noble King of Vatsa was depressed after his separation from his queen, but now, on this auspicious and extremely joyful occasion of his nuptial celebrations, the fire of love, fanned, as it were, by the marriage with Padmavati, burns brighter than ever to-day. (sees Padminika) Hullo, here's Padminika. What's the news, Padminika?

Padminika: Why, noble Vasantaka, don't you know that princess Padmavati is having a bad headache?

Jester: Truly, lady, I did not know.

Padminika: Well, then, go and inform my lord about it. I shall meanwhile go and hurry up with the ointment for her forehead.

Jester: Where has Princess Padmavati's bed been arranged?

1 A pavilion jutting out into an artificial lake.

Padminika: It has been spread in the Ocean Pavilion.

Jester: Well, you had better be off. I shall go and inform His Majesty.

(*Exeunt*).

(End of the Interlude).

(Enter the King).

King: (to himself),

Embarking once more on the sea of married life,
My thoughts go back to darling Vasavadatta,
Daughter of Avanti's king, my beloved wife,
Who was consumed by fierce flames at Lavanaka,
Even as a lotus flower in bud is nipped
By cruel frost whose e'r-hungry tongue is death-tipped. (1)

Jester: (entering) Quick, Your Majesty, quick.

King: What is the matter?

Jester: Queen Padmavati is having a bad headache.

King: Who told you?

Jester: Padminika.

King: Alas!

This new wedding with a girl of beauty,
Who has also a sense of duty,
Has toned down a little my great sorrow,
Though it is still there for those who burrow;
Having once quaffed the cup of misery,
I dread a like fate for Padmavati. (2)

Well, where is Padmavati?

Jester: Her bed has been arranged in the Ocean Pavilion.

King: Then, show me the way there.

Jester: Come this way, Your Majesty. (Both walk about). This is the Ocean Pavilion. Be pleased to enter.

King: You go in first.

Jester: All right (enters). Help! Help! Back, Your Majesty, stand back!

King: What's the matter?

Jester: Here is a cobra wriggling on the floor. The light of the lamp reveals its body clearly.

King: (enters and looks at the thing indicated, and smiles). (To himself) The idiot has taken this for a cobra! (aloud)

Fool, look closely, and you will see
That it's but a wreath flowery
Fallen from the portal arch high,
The gentle ev'ning breeze wafts it;
Its movements with a serpent's vie.
As it lies there turned ov'r a bit. (3).

Jester: (scrutinising the object closely) Your Majesty is right. This is indeed not a cobra. (enters the room and looks round attentively) Queen Padmavati must have come here and gone away.

King: Friend, she could not have come here.

Jester: How does Your Majesty know?

King: What is there in this?

See, the bed is unruffled as when 't was spread,
Undisturbed too is the quilt, and the pillow
Is not crushed, or stained yellow, blue, green or red
With any headache ointment doctors know;
Nothing is here to divert the patient's eyes,
No sick person will from bed so promptly rise. (4)

Jester: Then, you had better sit down on the bed for a while, and wait for the queen.

King: Very well (sits down). Friend, I feel awfully sleepy. Please tell me a story.

Jester: I'll tell you a story, but you must say "Hm! Hm!" to show that you are listening.

King: Very well.

Jester: There is a city called Ujjaini. In that city, there are some charming bathing pools.

King: What! Ujjaini, did you say?

Jester: If you don't like this story, I shall tell you another.

King: Oh, no. It is not that I do not like the story. Only,

It brings to mind the daughter of Avanti's King,
Who thought of all her people when we were starting,
And wept and shed on my breast red-hot tears of love,
Which welled from her eyes while she trembled like a dove. (5)

Besides, friend,

Oft, in the midst of lessons, would she fix her eyes,
On me, and gaze as if to read my inmost thoughts,
Her hand, with plectrum dropped, would then swing in such wise,
As if playing on my life-strings or my heart-knots. (6)

Jester: Well, I'll tell you another story. There is a city called Brahmadatta. In it, there ruled a king called Kampilya.

King: What is that? What did you say?

(Jester repeats what he has just said).

King: Idiot! You should say King Brahmadatta, and Kampilya city.

Jester: What? The king is Brahmadatta, and the city Kampilya?

King: Yes.

Jester: Then, wait a moment while I commit this to memory. King Brahmadatta, Kampilya city; King Brahmadatta, Kampilya city (repeats this several times). Now, listen. (To himself). Hullo, His Majesty is fast asleep! It is very chilly at this hour. I'll go and fetch my shawl. (Exit)

(Enter Vasavadatta, disguised as Avantika, and a maid).

Maid: Come, madam, come. The Princess is suffering from a severe headache.

Vasavadatta: I am very sorry to hear it. Where has the bed of Padmavati been arranged?

Maid: It has been spread in the Ocean Pavilion.

Vasavadatta: Then, lead the way (both walk round).

Maid: This is the Ocean Pavilion. Enter madam. Meanwhile, I shall go and hurry up with the ointment for her forehead. (Exit maid).

Vasavadatta: (to herself) Verily, the gods have no pity on me! Even Padmavati, who was a source of comfort to my noble lord, in the agony of his bereavement, has now fallen ill herself. I'll go in. (she enters and looks round). Oh, the carelessness of these servants! Padmavati is ill, and, yet, all of them have left her, with just a lamp as her companion. So, she is asleep. I'll sit down. But, if I sit at a distance from her, it will look as if I do not love her enough. So, I'll seat myself on her bed itself (sits down on the edge of the bed). I say, why is it that, as I sit here, my heart is throbbing with pleasure and excitement? Happily, her breathing is easy, unobstructed and regular. Her headache must have left her. Occupying only a small portion of the bed, she seems to invite me to clasp her in my arms. I will lie by her side (proceeds to lie down on the bed).

King: (talking in his sleep) Oh, Vasavadatta!

Vasavadatta: (rising abruptly from the bed) Humph! It's my noble lord, and not Padmavati. Has he seen me? If so, the great vow of Yaugandharayana[2] would have been made in vain.

King: Oh, daughter of Avanti's king!

Vasavadatta: Luckily, my noble lord is only dreaming. There is no one about. So, I'll stay here awhile, and gladden my eyes and my heart.

King: Oh, darling! Oh, beloved pupil! Respond to my call.

Vasavadatta: I am responding, my lord, I am responding.

King: Are you angry?

Vasavadatta: No, no. Only, sad and unhappy.

King: If you are not angry with me, why have you laid aside your ornaments?

Vasavadatta: What could be better than this?

King: Are you thinking of Virachita?[3]

Vasavadatta: (wrathfully) Shame! Even here Virachita!

King: Then, I implore your pardon for Virachita.
(he stretches out his hands).

Vasavadatta: I've stayed long enough. I may be seen here any moment. I shall go now. But I'll first replace the arm of my noble lord, that is hanging down, on the bed. (she does so, and goes away).

King: (Rising abruptly) Stay, Vasavadatta, stay! Alas!

I rushed after her in haste,
I knocked my head on the door,
Is it but a vision waste,
Too well suited to my taste?
Or, did I see her once more?
That's with me a point sore. (7)

Jester: (entering) Ah, Your Majesty is awake!

King: Friend, I've good news to tell you. Vasavadatta is alive! I saw her just now.

Only with beauty was she armed
The fortress of my heart she stormed,
And entered by the gate, the eye,
And has stopped there for e'r and aye. (7-a)

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[2] Yaugandharayana's intention was to conceal the fact of Vasavadatta's being alive till Vatsaraja had regained his kingdom with the help of the King of Magada, who might not have been willing to help if Padmavati were not the sole queen to enjoy the fruits of his help.

[3] A former mistress of Udayana.

Jester: Alas! Vasavadatta! Where is Vasavadatta? Vasavadatta died long ago.

King: Say not so, my friend.

She came and woke me now as I lay asleep,
On this very couch, and then departed fast,
"She perished in the flames" said Rumanvan deep
And took me in, but here is the truth at last. (8)
Ah, ev'n when on Padmavati's forehead I found
That unfading tilak[4] mark I learned from the snake,
A glimpse of the truth came, and in my heart the sound
"The Lady of Avanti lives" did my frame shake. (8-a)

Jester: Alas! Such a thing is impossible. Maybe you saw her in a dream, since I mentioned the bathing pools of Ujjaini and set you thinking of her ladyship.

King:

If dream it was, I should like to go on dreaming,
If it's but an illusion, may it last for e'r,
From such a dream there should never be a waking,
Nor should I from such an illusion recover. (9)

Jester: Friend, a sylph called "The Belle of Avanti"[5] is haunting this city. Maybe, it is she whom you saw.

King: Oh, no.

Waking up, I saw her with her hair unbraided,
And those dear eyes of hers without collyrium,
Like a lady guarding her virtue unfaded,
I assure you, friend, it was no delirium. (10)

Besides, friend,

This arm was by her but clasped in sleep,
But, see, all its hairs are still on end,
She clasped my arm in her tremor deep,
And what a message did it me send! (11)

Jester: Don't imagine any more absurdities now. Come, come. Let us go back to the ladies' court.

Chamberlain: (entering) Victory to my noble lord! Our great king, Darsaka, sends you these tidings:—"Your Majesty's minister, Rumanvan, has arrived in the vicinity with a large force to attack the usurper, Aruni. Likewise, my army, consisting of elephants, chariots, cavalry, and infantry, is fully mobilised. So, rise, and be ready to march.

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[4] Ceremonial saffron mark put on the forehead by married women among Hindus.

[5] Avantisundari.

And then:—
Divided are your enemies now;
Among your subjects confidence reigns;
Your rear will be protected with love
By us with the last drops in our veins.
I have done all things to see that the foe
Is sure to be vanquished and laid low.
Our forces have crossed the Ganges great,
You are again lord of Vatsa's Fate!" (12)

King: (rising) Excellent. Now,
In battle, when the elephants roar
Like ocean-waves, and war-horses neigh,
When the arrows in great torrents pour,
Foul Aruni shall I meet and slay! (13)

(*Exeunt Omnes*).
(End of Act V).

ACT VI.

(*Kausambi. Vatsaraja's Palace*).

(*Interlude*).

(Enter Mahasena's chamberlain).

Chamberlain: What ho! Who is here on duty at the Golden Arch Gate?

Female Door-Keeper: (Entering) Sir, it's I, Vijaya. What do you want me to do, sir?

Chamberlain: Good woman, take this message to Udayana whose fame has been enhanced by the re-conquest of the Vatsa country. Tell him "The chamberlain, belonging to the Raibhya clan, sent by Mahasena, has arrived here along with Queen Vasavadatta's nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by Queen Angaravati. They are both waiting at your gate."

Female Door-Keeper: Sir, this is not the proper place or time for me to carry a message.

Chamberlain: Why is it not the proper time or place?

Female Door-Keeper: Listen, sir. Today some one in the Suyamuna Palace[1] was playing on the lute. On hearing it, His Majesty said "I seem to hear the notes of Ghoshavati."

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[1] The Suyamuna Palace, like the Suganga Palace at Pataliputra mentioned in Mudrarakshasa.

Chamberlain: And then?

Female Door-Keeper: Then somebody went and asked the man "Where did you get this lute?" He replied "I saw it lying in a thicket of reeds on the banks of the Narmada. If His Majesty has any use for it, you may take it to him." So, they took it to the king who pressed it to his side, and went off into a swoon. On recovering consciousness, he said, with his face suffused with tears, "I see you, oh Ghoshavati, but her I see not!" That's why, sir, the occasion is not suitable. How can I take your message at such a time?

Chamberlain: Good woman, announce us. Our mission also has something to do with it.

Female Door-Keeper: Then, I'll announce you at once, sir. Ah, His Majesty is coming down from the Suyamuna Palace. I shall tell him now.

Chamberlain: Do, good woman.

(*Exeunt*).

(End of Interlude).

(Enter King and Jester).

King: (looking at the lute in his hand)

Oh, lute of sweetest tone, thou didst once repose
On the breasts and lap of the loveliest queen,
How did you survive in that jungle morose
Where birds dropped their dirt and covered all your sheen? (1)
You are an unfeeling thing, Ghoshavati. How else could you forget that unfortunate queen?
Thou felt'st not her hug, oh Ghoshavati,
As she, on her lovely hip, carried thee,
How couldst thou forget the sweet rhapsody
Of lying 'twixt her breasts when she was weary,
Her words and smiles when intervals started,
Or her plaintive cries for me when parted? (2)

Jester: Enough of this excessive sorrow, Your Majesty.

King: Don't say so, my friend:—

My passion which had lain dormant long
Has been re-awakened by this lute,
But the queen who loved it and its song,
I see not, and so am with grief mute. (3)

Vasantaka, take Ghoshavati to some skilful artist, have her re-strung, and bring her back to me speedily.

Jester: As Your Majesty orders (goes out with the lute).

(Enter Female Door-Keeper).

Female Door-Keeper: Victory to the King! The chamberlain of the Raibhya clan, sent by Mahasena, and Queen Vasavadatta's nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by Queen Angaravati, are waiting at the door.

King: Then, go and call Padmavati.

Female Door-Keeper: As Your Majesty orders (Exit).

King: How now? How soon this news[2] has reached Mahasena!

(Enter Padmavati and the female door-keeper).

Female Door-Keeper: This way, my queen!

Padmavati: Victory to my lord!

King: Padmavati, did you hear that Mahasena's chamberlain, of the Raibhya clan, sent by him, and Vasavadatta's nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by Queen Angaravati, have arrived here, and are waiting outside?

Padmavati: I shall be glad to have good news of my relatives, my noble lord.

King: It is fitting that you, my queen, should look upon Vasavadatta's relatives as your own. Be seated, Padmavati. Why don't you sit down?

Padmavati: Does my noble lord want me to be seated by his side when receiving these people?

King: What harm is there in that?

Padmavati: It may look callous to them, as I am now in the place of Queen Vasavadatta, their Princess.

King: But, it would be a gross breach of etiquette to prevent those persons, who are entitled to see you, my wife, from doing so. So, please be seated.

Padmavati: As my noble lord commands (sits down). My lord, I feel rather uneasy as to what Mahasena and his queen will say.

King: Quite so, Padmavati.

My heart is full of forebodings, my darling,
I dread the most harsh words he may have to say:
I fled with his daughter, without him telling,
And then, woe me, lost her in a fire that day!
My merits, my dearie, are all exhausted,
Fickle Fortune has got with me disgruntled;
I feel afraid like a son who his sire's ire

[2] This refers either to the marriage of Padmavati or to the re-conquest of the Vatsa kingdom, or both.

Has roused by foolish acts of consequences dire. (4)

Padmavati: Nothing can be prevented when its proper time has come.

Female Door-Keeper: The chamberlain and nurse are waiting at the door.

King: Conduct them here speedily.

Female Door-Keeper: As my lord commands (Exit).

(Enter the chamberlain, the nurse and the female door-keeper).

Chamberlain:

On coming here to this allied realm,
My heart is filled with rejoicing great,
But grief and sorrow me overwhelm
When I remember my princess' fate!
You could have robbed him, oh unkind fate,
Of his realm, but spared him his mate! (5)

Female Door-Keeper: Here is my lord, sir. Approach him.

Chamberlain: (approaching the king) Victory to my noble lord!

Nurse: Victory to my noble lord!

King: (to the chamberlain—respectfully) Sir,

Is he well, that king of kings,
Who can make and unmake kings,
He whose alliance I sought,
He who never me forgot? (6)

Chamberlain: Yes. Mahasena is well. He enquires whether all's well here also.

King: (rising from his seat) What are Mahasena's commands?

Chamberlain: This is worthy of the son of Vaidehi![3] Now, pray be seated, and hear Mahasena's message.

King: As Mahasena orders (sits down).

Chamberlain: "Congratulations on your regaining the kingdom seized by enemies! For,

Never can the faint-hearted and the weak,
Have great energy or activity:
None can of royal glory dream or speak
Who's not overflowing with energy." (7)

King: Sir, it is all due to Mahasena's blessings.

Defeated I stood before him shame-faced,

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[3] Because Udayana was the son of Mrigavati, a princess of Kosala and a descendant of Sita or Vaidehi.

But, like a son of his, he me embraced;
His daughter I cunningly took away,
And failed to keep her safe, that woeful day!
But, he, after hearing about her end,
This honoured embassy to me did send.
So, his love is the same and has not waned,
And, by his grace, my land too is regained. (8)

Chamberlain: Well, that is the message of Mahasena. This lady here will deliver the message of the queen.

King: Ah, mother!

Is she well, that queen of queens,
The first among sixteen queens,
My mother, the town deity,
Who, for us, shed tears weighty? (9)

Nurse: The queen is well, and sends enquiries for the health of your lordship and all that are yours.

King: The health of all that are mine! You see what kind of health those who were mine had!

Nurse: Enough of this excessive sorrow, my lord.

Chamberlain: Courage, my noble lord. Grieved for thus by Your Majesty, Mahasena's daughter, though dead, is not really dead. But, surely,

Death cannot be stayed when the hour has struck,
The pitcher must fall down when the rope breaks;
With men and trees the same law is at work,
They grow, and they are cut down in Time's wakes. (10)

King: Say not so, sir,

How can I forget Mahasena's daughter,
My pupil, my dear queen, ev'n in births to come?
Death may come on me, earth may turn to water,
But n'er will they her dear memory benumb. (11)

Nurse: The Queen sends this message. "Vasavadatta is no more! You are to me and to Mahasena as dear as our own Gopalaka and Palaka, and had been, from the very first, pitched upon by us to be our son-in-law. It is for that purpose that we had you brought to Ujjaini. On the pretext of teaching her the lute, we placed her in your hands, even before marrying you to her before the god of fire. In your impetuosity, you eloped with her without waiting for the formal nuptial celebrations. Then, we had the paintings of yourself and Vasavadatta done on boards, and we celebrated the marriage of you two in effigy. We send you these paintings now.

May the sight of them give you some satisfaction!"

King: Ah, how kind and pleasing are the words of Her Majesty!

These kind words more precious to me than a hundred thrones are,
All my transgressions cannot her immense love for me mar. (12)

Padmavati: My noble lord, I should like to see the portrait painting of my elder sister, and salute her.

Nurse: See, princess, see. (shows her the painting of Vasavadatta).

Padmavati: (to herself) Humph! She bears a striking resemblance to Lady Avantika (aloud). My noble lord, is this a good likeness of Queen Vasavadatta? (hands it over to the king).

King: (looks at it). It's not her likeness. It's her very self, I imagine. Oh, alas!

How could this delicate complexion
Have come by such cruel destruction?
How did the dreadful fire dare ravage
This sweet face in fashion so savage? (13)

Padmavati: If I see the painting of my noble lord, I can say whether the other one is a good likeness of the Queen or not.

Nurse: Here it is, princess. Have a look at it! (gives it).

Padmavati: (Takes it and sees it) (to herself) The painting of my noble lord is an exact likeness of his very self. I infer therefrom that the other too is an exact likeness of the Queen.

King: My queen, ever since you looked at that picture, I see you are pleased but perplexed. Why is that?

Padmavati: My noble lord, there is a lady living here who looks exactly like that portrait.

King: What! of Vasavadatta?

Padmavati: Yes.

King: Then bring her here at once. How came she to be here?

Padmavati: My noble lord, before my marriage, a certain Brahman left her with me as a ward, saying that she was his sister. Her husband is away, and she shuns the sight of other men. So, when you see her in my company, you will know who it is.

King: (to himself)

If she a wandering Brahman's sister be,
She cannot be what I take her to be;
In this wide world we now and then see
Some people resembling like pea and pea. (14)

(Enter Female Door-Keeper).

Female Door-Keeper: Victory to my noble lord! Here's a Brahman from Ujjaini who says that he left his sister in the hands of our queen as a ward. He is waiting at the door to take his sister back.

King: Is he that Brahman you mentioned, Padmavati?

Padmavati: It must be.

King: Bring in that Brahman at once with the formalities proper to the inner Court.

Female Door-Keeper: As Your Majesty commands (Exit).

King: Padmavati, will you now conduct that lady here?

Padmavati: As my noble lord commands (Exit Padmavati).

(Enter Yaugandharayana and the female door-keeper.)

Yaugandharayana: (to himself)

For the king's own sake alone I hid the Queen,
All my thoughts and acts were e'r for his welfare,
My scheme has succeeded, but how will I fare
Before my king, it has yet to be seen. (15)

Female Door-Keeper: There is my lord. Approach him, sir.

Yaugandharayana: (approaching) Victory to Your Majesty!

King: I seem to have heard that voice before. Oh, Brahman, did you leave your sister in the hands of Padmavati as a ward?

Yaugandharayana: Certainly, I did.

King: (to door-keeper) Then, bring his sister before us at once.

Female Door-Keeper: As my lord commands (Exit female door-keeper).

(Enter Padmavati, Avantika and the door-keeper).

Padmavati: Come, lady. I have some good news for you.

Avantika: What is it?

Padmavati: Your brother has come for you.

Avantika: Happily, he remembers me still.

Padmavati: (approaching the king) Victory to my noble lord! Here is my ward.

King: Make a formal restitution, Padmavati. A deposit should be returned in the presence of witnesses. The worthy Raibhya here and this good lady will act as recorders.

Padmavati: (to Yaugandharayana) Now, sir, resume your charge of this lady.

Nurse: (looking at Lady Avantika closely) But, this is Princess Vasavadatta!

King: What! Mahasena's daughter! Oh, my queen, go into the ladies' court with Padmavati.

Yaugandharayana: No, no. She must not go in there. This lady, I tell you, is my sister.

King: What are you saying? Assuredly, this is Mahasena's daughter.

Yaugandharayana: Oh, king!

Thou art a proud scion of Bharata's race,
Purity, learning and virtue crown thy face,
To stop her by force is unworthy of thee
Who art the model of ev'rything kingly. (16)

King: Very well, but let us just see this remarkable resemblance of form. Remove the obstruction.[4]

Yaugandharayana: Victory to my noble lord!

Vasavadatta: Victory to my noble lord!

King: My God, this is Yaugandharayana, and this is Mahasena's daughter:

Do I see the vision again,
Or is it now reality?
I saw her thus last time, when sane,
But it was all futility. (17)

(Looks closely at Vasavadatta). There is no doubt now that it is the daughter of Avanti's king.

She whom I deemed dead and wanted to join in death,
Ah, she has been got back by me ev'n in this birth. (17-a)

Yaugandharayana: Sir, by concealing the queen, I am guilty of a great offence. I beg of you to forgive me (throws himself at the feet of the king).

King: (raising him) You are certainly Yaugandharayana!

By madness feigned, by wars designed,
By deep-laid plans from cunning books,
You pulled me up, as if by hooks,
When I sank low and got resigned. (18)

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[4] Perhaps, the veil is meant. It cannot be a side curtain.

Yaugandharayana: What have I done? I simply followed the fortunes of my lord.

Padmavati: Ah, this then is Queen Vasavadatta! Lady, in treating you as a companion, I have unconsciously transgressed the bounds of propriety. I bow my head and beg your forgiveness. (falls at the feet of Vasavadatta).

Vasavadatta: (raising Padmavati) Rise up, rise up, oh gracious woman! If anything offends, it is your prostrating to me unnecessarily, for nothing at all.

Padmavati: I am greatly beholden to you.

King: What was your intention, Yaugandharayana, in concealing the queen?

Yaugandharayana: My one idea was to save Kausambi.

King: Why did you leave her as a ward in the hands of Padmavati?

Yaugandharayana: The soothsayers, Pushpaka and Bhadraka, had predicted that Padmavati would become the consort of Your Majesty.

King: Did Rumanvan also know about this trick?

Yaugandharayana: My lord, they all knew.

King: What a rogue Rumanvan is!

Yaugandharayana: My lord, let the worthy Raibhya and this good lady return this very day to Ujjaini to announce there that Queen Vasavadatta is safe.

King: Oh, no. We will all go together, along with Queen Padmavati.

Epilogue.

Let our lion-like monarch rule this famous land from sea to sea,
With the great Himalayan and Vindhyan chains as ear-pendants,
May his resplendent imperial umbrella for e'r be
Spread in solitary splendour o'r his loving dependants!
(19)

(*Exeunt Omnes*).
(End of Act VI).
(End of Svapna Vasavadatta).

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ERRATA

Page	*Line from top or bottom*	*For*	*Read*
22	line 3 from top	the city vairantya	the city of Vairantya
23	line 19 from top	sub-clauses	sub-classes
23	line 6 from bottom	This *rasa* is divided into three sub-clauses, namely, *Yuddha*	The *Dharma Vira rasa* is found prominently in Rama's
30	line 17 from top	Hidimbi	Hidimba
37	line 4 from bottom	dried-up	dried up
42	line 7 from top	Tassaud's.	Tassaud's,
50	line 6 from top	Vasavadatta	Vasavadatta'
57	line 11 from bottom	though never conquered any portion of the earth he	though he never conquered any portion of the earth
61	line 6 from top	wodrs	words
67	line 10 from top	to back alone	to go back alone
73	line 8 from top	that; sometimes	that sometimes
83	line 9 from bottom	in Yaugandharayana's house	in Vatsaraja's palace
92	line 10 from top	horses	horse
105	line 13 from bottom	who is there here?	who is here?
109	line 7 from top	by	my
110	line 17 from bottom	break	break up
110	line 1 from bottom	This is his second vow	For first vow, see Act 1, verse 16
119	line 4 from top	painting	paintings
119	line 6 from top	disorder	disorder;
119	line 8 from top	wetting	wetting,
128	line 21 from top	sees chamberlain	sees the chamberlain

Page	*Line from top or bottom*	*For*	*Read*
131	line 18 from top	Hope,	Hope
131	line 16 from bottom	Reverned	Reverend
133	line 12 from top	re	he
135	line 6 from top	Four	For